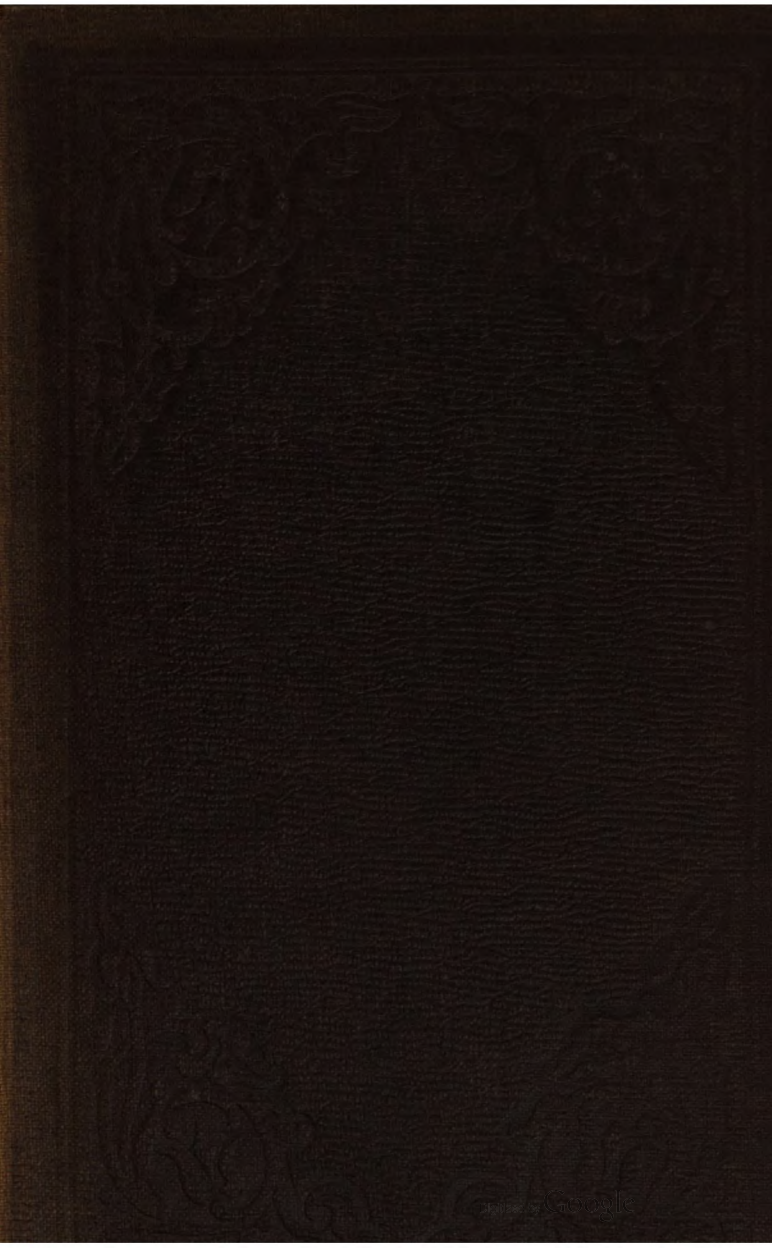

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THORNBERRY ABBEY.



THORNBERRY ABBEY,

A TALE

OF

THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.

“ In vertue and in holy almesse dede
They liven alle, and never asonder wende,
Til death departeth hem, this lif they lede.
And fareth now wel, my tale is at an ende.
Now JESU CRIST, that of his might may sende
Joye after wo, governe us in his grace
And kepe us alle that ben in this place.”

CHAUCER. “ Man of Lawe’s Tale.”

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THORNBERRY ABBEY.

CHAPTER I.

A BEGINNING.

“Yes, call her Alethea,” said Mr. Eynon to his wife one morning, when a consultation was holding as to the best name to give their first-born child; “yes, call her Alethea; the name has a good meaning, and good Queen Bess, more than once, bestowed it on her favoured Godchildren.”

“And what is its meaning?” asked a beautiful boy, who stood by the speaker’s side.

“It means truth, my child; and what did your namesake, Herbert, say of truth?”

The child paused a moment, and then, with blushing face but a firm voice, repeated the lines from the old poem of the Church Porch—

“Dare to be true, nothing can need a lie,
The fault that needs it most grows two thereby.”

Mr. Eynon praised the boy, who turned aside and hid his glowing cheeks on the coverlid of the cradle

where the baby Alethea lay. He repeated her name several times in various tones of patronage and affection, and there and then bestowed on her the diminutive of "Ella;" a name she never after lost.

Mr. Eynon was a clergyman of the English Establishment. At the time of his child's birth he was forty-five years of age; his wife was about ten years younger. Being the second son of a gentleman of considerable distinction in the county, he had been carefully reared; on leaving the university he had been ordained by the Protestant bishop of the diocese, and, after the usual training as a curate, was presented to a family living. The proceeds of this living, added to his share of the paternal inheritance, had placed Mr. Eynon in more than commonly affluent circumstances, and his cultivated mind, probity of character, and natural amiability of disposition, made him a good steward of the favours bestowed on him—he was a man universally beloved, for his native humility and courteous bearing recommended him to those whose sentiments, on important subjects, might vary from his own. He conducted the affairs of his parish with a quiet but untiring zeal. A good neighbour, a kind landlord, a tender benefactor, a sincere friend—he was a fond husband to the most devoted of wives, and a loving and careful father to little Alethea and his ward, Herbert Stafford, who had been left to his care by the tried friend of his youth. At the time

when our story begins, Herbert had lived three years with Mr. Eynon—that is, ever since his widowed father had, on his death-bed, consigned him to his care, leaving his friend full power over the person and estate of the child, a responsibility which was admirably fulfilled.

Having made this necessary digression, we must return to the room where Herbert's first affections towards Alethea were drawn forth, affections which so increased, and became a part of himself as years passed on, that first the boy, and then the man was unable to form a single hope or plan for the future, apart from the thought of this first and tenderest friend.

“And now, having fixed upon the name, when is the christening to be?”

“Any day next week, I think,” said the lady. “Your cousin, Maria Worth, and Mrs. Hardy, will be the godmothers, and have you really settled for your brother to be the godfather?”

I will write to him immediately, was the reply, and in a few minutes a note was written to James Eynon, of Thornberry Abbey, Esquire, begging him to be sponsor to the child, who was, in fact, his heiress.

Thornberry Abbey was about fifty miles distant from the parish and village of Seacombe, where Edward Eynon lived, the only brother of the owner of the old patrimonial estate, so, in less than twenty-four

hours, notwithstanding a retired country and cross roads, the bachelor brother had received and read the letter.

The Squire of Thornberry was a peculiar man; he had never had good health, but it is questionable whether, from a natural selfishness, his complaints were not a pleasure to him. He had retired, in a great degree, from society, which was another reason for bestowing an unusual share of thought upon himself, and, as the past history of his family, and the manuscript documents which he loved to study, were not very enlivening, he had got into a habit of thinking himself a most unfortunate member of an unfortunate family, and of pitying his poor brother Edward, who was so blind to facts as positively to be happy.

The Squire of Thornberry received and read the letter. He was, notwithstanding his peculiarities, a kind man, and loved his brother, but he had never thought of being Godfather to his child. He had never been Godfather to any child. What was he to do? He was quite agitated. He walked up and down the room till he felt a little angry with his brother, and then very sorry for *himself*, and the many disappointments he had had in life. He had thought Edward would never have married, and that was a great disappointment; and when he did marry, he had thought he would never have had any children, that was another disappointment—indeed, a cruel dis-

appointment, it had lasted two years—he could truly say a cloud had hung over him for two years, and so heavily, that he could scarcely lift his head up when better things were promised. Of course, after such trials, it was quite natural to expect a boy, but, with the usual ill-luck of the family, it was a girl, and now Edward positively asked him to be Godfather. No, it was too bad; so he wrote a note to say his spirits were not equal to considering the responsibilities of the office; in fact, he had had too much to do with responsibilities all his life, as his dear brother knew very well. That he wished he could suggest some other person, especially if it would save them trouble; for he knew what trouble was too well not to feel for others. He approved of the name, though there was none like it in the pedigree, but, perhaps, the new name would bring better luck than the poor family had ever yet enjoyed, and apologising for the shortness of the letter, on account of the neuralgia in his hand, he added some affectionate remembrances, and closed and sealed the epistle just as the coffee was brought in.

Coffee was our friend's favourite beverage. He made it always himself. The machine in which he made it had been improved by himself, and it seemed to be the only thing in the world which gave him entire satisfaction. It is, therefore, not much to be wondered at, that before he had finished his second

cup, he should have commenced a train of thought more favourable to the little heiress of his honours, and the consequence was, that the words "excellent coffee," deliberately uttered, were accompanied by the more energetic action of throwing the letter just written to his brother into the fire. He then rang the bell, and bid his servant send instantly to the village of Thornberry, to Mr. Harry Lester, and ask him to come back with the messenger, as Mr. Eynon desired to speak to him immediately on a matter of consequence.

Mr. Lester was the clergyman of the parish, he had been his school friend and college companion, indeed the friendship was hereditary, for their fathers had loved before them, and to Harry Lester, "good, honest Harry Lester," Mr. Eynon appealed on all occasions.

The hour which necessarily passed between the sending the message and the arrival of the friend, was employed in examining the pedigree, and reckoning up how many of "the ill-fated family" had died leaving girls only, who had taken the name and estates into other families; how many had met with disasters by sea and land, and how many, and these were not a few, who had met with violent deaths; so when the smiling, broad, rubicund face of Harry Lester appeared, he really wanted its cheering influence. Harry Lester, though approaching fifty-five years of

age, was still a very handsome man, and his fine features were now illuminated by the bright benevolence which played round his mouth and lived in his full blue eye. He was rather fat than stout, and this made him appear shorter than he really was. His hair was thin and grey, and brushed back from his ample forehead, and the evening air had given a hue to his complexion which completed his appearance as the picture of strength and good temper, and the best possible contrast to the friend who received him with more than usual warmth.

"Sit down, Harry. How well you look. A very disagreeable thing has happened. You look so well—just as you looked at Oxford more than thirty years ago."

"I am older, Eynon, and wiser, I hope. Yes, older, and wiser, and *stiffer*," he added, striking his top-boots with the short riding-whip he held in his hand; "but there's nothing disagreeable in that, so tell us your bad news."

"Sit down, then, and I'll tell. Edward's *child is a girl*, Harry."

"We knew that a fortnight since," said Mr. Lester, whose large eyes grew yet larger as he heard the enunciation of the well-known fact.

"Yes, but four times our property has gone by a female into another family."

"Well."

"It annoys me to be Godfather under these circum-

stances, so I wrote a note to Edward to say so. Then I did not like to vex Edward, so I sent for you. I think you would make an excellent Godfather."

Mr. Lester positively objected to be offered as a substitute, but proposed what Mr. Eynon finally agreed to, that he should be sent as the proxy; and before the evening was over the new-born child had become quite an object of interest to her eccentric uncle, and he had privately commenced a plan for willing her away from her parent's roof to soothe his old age, and sit at the head of his table.

Mr. Lester asked who were to be the other sponsors.

"Mrs. Hardy and Miss Worth."

"Ah! all from Thornberry village. Then we can go together."

"Yes," said Mr. Eynon, "I had thought that might be necessary. Indeed, it weighed a good deal with me. I could have taken Maria Worth, she is a good creature, but with my health, Mrs. Hardy could not have gone in the same carriage with me. But my brother and sister are quite right; she has been kind to Mrs. Edward, and *offered*, I believe. But you can go in my carriage, Lester, and take them both." And Mr. Eynon leaned back in his chair, and, in a tone of thankfulness, said his mind was exceedingly relieved.

"Then, now, good night, my friend," said Lester.

"I shall go back, and to bed, for my limbs are feeling the run we had to-day,—as fine a fox as ever was

turned out; we had five-and-twenty-minutes, without a check, of the prettiest running you ever saw. We found close by the Abbey walls. That's the best cover we have; I can always calculate on a sure find there."

"The ghosts of the abbots don't scare you?"

"Jolly old fellows," said Harry Lester, "many's the good run they had in their time, I'll warrant it."

"I must leave you to Mrs. Hardy on that matter," said Mr. Eynon; "*I* can't find fault with you, Harry, but Mrs. Hardy, and a great many besides, say you are a sad scandal to them; indeed, sometimes I wish you would give up the hounds, and live more to please them. I speak in the greatest friendship. You know I would not vex you for the world."

Mr. Lester received this with positive laughter.

"Live like them," he repeated, "live like them; that joke is too good. Live alive to my neighbour's faults, and dead to my own. Now, my hunting is a means of great good, and I maintain it. I know every farmer in my parish, and his wife and children. They hunt with me, and twice a-year I give them a dinner. The consequence is, they know me well, and like me also. In their troubles they come to me, and not a decent man in the parish but knows he is welcome at my house. The church is full every Sunday, as you know. When I miss a face, for I know them as well as the dogs in my pack, I ask where he is, and receive his excuse; and if a

stranger comes into church, at a look from me, the first farmer in the parish makes way for him. The dean rural pronounces the church 'in perfect repair,' and we have an honest pride in keeping it so. In fact, the good conduct of my parish is undeniable. My people are neither as idle nor as poor as their neighbours, and there is but one meeting-house in it. But one meeting-house! and if I have a good hunting season this year, I'll get the farmers to put down that, for nothing can long stand against us when we hold together."

"Well, well," said Mr. Eynon, "you seem always to be right; certainly it is remarked at our magistrates' meetings, that we have never any work out of your parish."

"To be sure not," replied Mr. Lester, giving another of his infectious laughs; "we have a law of our own. I always hear of those things, and my word is law in small cases; and, 'Come, my friends, shake hands, bad blood spoils the scent,' often heals worse differences. I scarcely ever saw the man, who, after a good day's sport, could not give the true hand and the open brow to his neighbour. But now it is time to say good night."

The friends separated, and the sound of Mr. Lester's horse's hoofs were soon heard on the frozen drive in that steady trot which was his usual pace on the road.



CHAP. II.

A CONTINUATION OF THE BEGINNING.

The time of the christening approached, and as Mr. Eynon had found it easy to arrange affairs to his own satisfaction, he had begun to take a great interest in the matter. He prepared a very kind letter, full of good wishes for his brother. A buck was killed that a side of venison might go to Seacombe; a silver cup was bought for a Godfather's gift to the child, and an offering in money was entrusted to Mr. Lester for the poor of the parish.

The day arrived for the sponsors to depart. Mr. Eynon himself saw the carriage was in perfect order, and gave all the necessary directions. No one thought more of comfort than Mr. Eynon. The carriage drove to the village, took up Mrs. Hardy, Miss Worth, and lastly Mr. Lester; then the party proceeded on their journey. It was a hard day's work, but horses had been written for that no disappointments might occur, and by a not very late hour in the evening, the trio had reached Seacombe. The journey had been a particularly prosperous one. The subject of hunting had never been mentioned. Mrs.

Hardy, who secretly felt it to be some honour to be sponsor to the heiress of Thornberry, was too much gratified to be disagreeable. Miss Worth was like herself, always obliging, always meek and charitable in all her feelings. Mr. Lester was full of the kind politeness which distinguished him, and his open countenance showed the happiness he felt. No questionable subjects were introduced, and lively converse and mutual pleasantries beguiled the way.

The day after their arrival at Seacombe was that fixed for the christening.

The father had intended it to take place in the fine old parish church which stood near the vicarage, and he was seconded by Mr. Lester, but Mrs. Hardy was vehement for the use of the drawing-room, and, as the day was cold, and his wife delicate, Mr. Edward Eynon yielded the point, and the drawing-room was used. A large china basin of beautiful manufacture was used for a font; the infant was clothed in a cambric frock, the gift of Mrs. Hardy, and the uncle's silver cup was duly admired by the party assembled to drink caudle in the nursery and servant's hall.

A day or two passed. It was arranged that Miss Worth should remain at Seacombe, and Mrs. Hardy and Mr. Lester were to return together.

The farewells were spoken, and Mrs. Hardy's protestations of pleasure in the visit had not ceased, when the carriage moved away. Mr. Lester was unusually silent.

The scenes in which he had lately moved reminded him of days past, when he too had had a wife, and had poured on an only child the waters of baptism. His child was still the dear treasure of his heart, but his wife had died shortly after her infant's birth, and had left a blank which nothing could ever fill. Her memory was cherished with the liveliest affection, and though the generality of people were not tired of saying that Harry Lester was just the man to marry again, his few confidential friends knew that the exact contrary was the case. At first, therefore, Mrs. Hardy, who, though she had buried father, mother, and husband, was often heard to declare that she had known neither need, sorrow, sickness, nor any other adversity, talked on undisturbed. But from praising her host and hostess, the baby's beauty and the cleanliness of the nurse, she passed on to more serious matters; admired the colour of the china vase which contained the water at the christening, and then congratulated herself that she had gained her point about the use of the drawing-room, which "for people who *had* drawing-rooms was a far better place than the public church, for what was, after all, only a very beautiful form."

This Mr. Lester could not bear. He reproved her sharply for speaking in such terms of a sacrament. Mrs. Hardy replied with great determination, and while the cleryman contended for the sacrament being

“an outward visible form of an inward spiritual grace;” the lady maintained that if there were any grace given at the time it was not that which is called Regeneration. Mrs. Hardy quoted scripture, and Mr. Lester met scripture by scripture, which part of the controversy we will not, out of reverence, give more particularly. Then Mr. Lester appealed to the doctrine of the Church of England. He repeated parts of the baptismal service in which it was plainly asserted that baptism was regeneration, as in the address to the congregation and throughout the prayers; and he repeated the words “seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that this child is by baptism regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ’s church,” exhorting Mrs. Hardy to believe what her own communion taught.

But the lady said, that such teaching was nothing short of Popery, that she should pray for her God-child to undergo the real regeneration of the heart, when she was old enough to read the Bible, and be truly converted.

To which Mr. Lester replied, that such talk as hers was nothing short of heresy. “Madame,” he said, “the gift which came on her at baptism, not to call it by any name, that gift has made her a member of the Church, and a child of God. In conjunction with the sacrament, it will possess her of sufficient strength to withstand the world, the flesh, and the devil, and may God and his holy angels guard her

from any such course of life which would make what you call conversion necessary."

"Holy angels! no conversion!" repeated Mrs. Hardy; "Oh! Mr. Lester, Mr. Lester, truly the Scriptures say—'The fear of man is a snare,' so I will be bold to tell you this day that you are no true shepherd, sir; these are not Bible doctrines; I would not set up my own opinion, but I cannot help saying, and I say it to discharge my conscience, that I *may*, and perhaps *do*, know the true teaching of Scriptures as well, and perhaps better, than one of your life."

"My life!" exclaimed the roused Mr. Lester.

"Yes, sir, your life. I must speak the truth, your life; your scandalous life; your hunting; your friendship with farmers, and the low and vulgar; your putting down the meeting-houses, so good, so necessary for the poor; and above all, your patronage of those dreadful Papists. That man, 'the priest,' as they call him, walking through your shrubbery, and he, and all that Mrs. Monkton's household, walking, by your request, as every body knows, through Thornberry woods, and under the very Abbey walls—I wonder they are not ashamed to look at them." Here the lady made a pause, but receiving no reply, she quickly resumed. "Think, Mr. Lester, think what an example you are setting. Think of your congregation. I am one, and must know that many like myself are hungering and thirsting for the waters,

and get nothing but the coldest and dryest morality. No saving truth in your discourses, sir—and often have I sat there, and pitied the poor creatures around me, but I must say”—and here the voice became exceedingly pathetic—“I must say, my heart has bled for your poor boy—your son, Mr. Lester—brought up as he is, fed on dry bones as one may say. Indeed” —. Her name, pronounced in a voice of thunder by her companion, stopped her from proceeding; but, suddenly calming himself, Mr. Lester said, “Mrs. Monkton’s priest is a gentleman, and her household respectable. It saves them a distance of two miles, when going from Monkton to the village, if they walk by the Abbey and through my small grounds. No one has any right to complain of this; and however much better than his father my son becomes, I hope he will never forget the courtesy due to a neighbour.”

“I did not know your son was so sure of succeeding you, sir,” said the angry lady rather sarcastically.

“I do not know that he will—the observation was a general one. But, as he has chosen the Church, I hope such may be the case when I am removed.”

Mrs. Hardy heaved a sigh. “Sir,” she said, “after our conversation—after your open avowal of popish doctrines, and your determination to keep friends with those we are expressly told in the Bible to avoid, you can hardly be surprised if I leave your

church; I can no longer sit under your ministry; I am driven out."

"And may I ask where you are going?"

"To those whose doctrines are more scriptural than yours, sir. This is a benighted part of the country, I know; the light of the Gospel is hidden and only shines here and there; but I believe I shall consult Lady Martin; she is a sweet Christian woman, and no doubt I shall be granted a seat in their new church in the park."

"No doubt," echoed Mr. Lester; and the carriage then stopping, he got out, and sat with the servant outside for the remainder of the journey.

The next morning Mrs. Hardy ordered her little phaeton, and desired her man to drive to Belle Vue, and, Lady Martin being at home, she was soon seated in her ladyship's boudoir. Lady Martin was rather an elegant looking woman; who she was, as to parentage, was not made clear to the gossipers on her marriage with Sir Alexander. That she was rich and highly evangelical were the only attainable facts. Sir Alexander was also rich and highly evangelical, so it was supposed to be a very suitable match. The six-and-twenty years which had passed since she came as a bride to Belle Vue, had touched her beauty very lightly, so that people declared she was more like the elder sister of her children than their mother. Mrs. Hardy found her in a room adorned and fitted

up so as to heighten the effect of the charms scarcely yet upon the wane. China, marble, alabaster, and an abundance of pictures, vases of flowers, elegantly bound books, and a plate glass bookcase, suited well with the rich rose-coloured velvet furniture; and the sun's rays, passing into the apartment through blinds of the same hue, gave to the complexion of the fair occupant the most exquisite tint imaginable. A scent of rose-water pervaded the apartment. Mrs. Hardy was delighted.

"Dear Lady Martin, if you were not so good I should feel obliged to apologise, but I come to you for advice and assistance."

After this beginning the tale was soon told, and the offer of a seat in the new church made and accepted.

"You will hear the gospel," said Lady Martin.

"I'm sure I shall, I told Mr. Lester I should hear it *here*; how much all the country owe you! When will the church be consecrated?"

"Oh! I don't know, indeed, dear friend; to tell the truth, we are not very anxious about that. There is a good deal about consecration which we do not much admire, I may be too scrupulous. It is licensed, and that is all that is necessary, you know."

Mrs. Hardy did not quite understand, but acquiesced in what her companion said, and turned the conversation on Mr. Lester. Lady Martin said she

knew very little of him, though they had been neighbours so many years. She pitied him from her heart, and had never got over the disappointment he had given her the first time they met.

“It was at a dinner party I found myself placed next him at table; my heart was very full. I said to him, that I was always glad to find myself next to a clergyman; ‘then,’ said I, ‘religion is my only topic, and I never speak of anything else to them.’ Well, he looked at me in his steady way, and asked, with an air, too, of anxious inquiry, whether I was never afraid of casting my pearls before swine? And another time, when I ventured to speak of my feelings about Arabella, who was then six years old, fearing, as I then did, that grace had not touched her heart, he positively asked if she had never been christened.”

“It is just like him,” replied Mrs. Hardy. “Oh! the trial he has been to me for many years. But not anything is so bad as his great regard for Mrs. Monkton.”

“Dear me! does he go *there*? I did not know Mrs. Monkton visited.”

“I don’t think he goes there, but they walk through his place, and he has persuaded Mr. Eynon to let them go through the Abbey woods.”

“It makes one tremble,” said her ladyship in a suppressed tone of horror; “what can we say of

those who thus tamper with sin, and touch the unclean thing. I think some one should speak to Mr. Eynon; I will ask Barrington to-night."

"Is Mr. Barrington Martin here?" exclaimed Mrs. Hardy, "I thought he was on his wedding tour."

"Ah! dear friend, I have let out the secret," and Lady Martin affected a little delicate distress. "The fact is, they are both here, but it must not be mentioned. They will appear at church on Sunday. As soon as possible they will reside here, and dear Barrington will be our minister; but you have never seen my new child."

"I should like to see her," said Mrs. Hardy with very honest warmth. "May I hope for such a favour?"

"I will see," replied Lady Martin; "it would be a little out of course, I suppose. She is so interesting; just the wife for Barrington. We were all at her father's house at the marriage, and the Sunday before Barrington preached—such a sermon—every one was affected, and poor Caro—you would have pitied her. She was taken out of church almost in hysterics," and at the recollection Lady Martin wept. Mrs. Hardy also seemed touched, and sighed and lifted up her eyes; and on her companion resuming the conversation, was even more attentive than before.

"And the night before the marriage, I shall never forget it, Barrington gave an exposition, and was

quite carried away in prayer. It made such an impression on the servants. Then everything was done as quietly as possible the next day. Caro was dressed with such simplicity; only a straw bonnet and a single white ribbon, and wore the same dress she travelled in—only a coloured silk; and there were no favours, nor wedding-cake, nor any of those purely worldly things. We were a very short time in church; indeed, Barrington, whose feelings on every subject are so very correct, said to the clergyman in our hearing, that he wished the service to be cut as short as possible, so as everything disagreeable was left out. The ceremony did not last many minutes. Breakfast was ready on our return, and all the household assembled to congratulate in the hall, which was really very nice, for Barrington made it the occasion of a sweet little address. He is so indefatigable. ‘In season and out of season’—that is his motto Mrs. Hardy.”

The fitting congratulations had scarcely been offered to the mother of such a son, when the bride, in obedience to a summons from Lady Martin, entered the room.

Mrs. Barrington Martin was very nice looking; she was, therefore, less disfigured by the plainness and almost vulgarity of her dress than might have been expected. Her work was in her hand—a man’s coarse flannel shirt—and when Mrs. Hardy was in-

roduced as "a dear sister in Christ" by Lady Martin, she advanced and kissed her.

Mrs. Hardy openly expressed her admiration, and having ascertained that her new friend never worked for any but the poor, or for some religious purpose—never sung nor played anything but hymns—never danced—never laughed—never read works of fiction—never wore bows on her bonnet, or any kind of jewellery, she rose to take her departure, perfectly satisfied with the religion which could produce such fruits.

But Mrs. Hardy was not to go so easily. "You are interested in the consecration of our new church," said Lady Martin, "and so I *must* ask you to give me one shilling for the expenses attendant on it. It may be some time before it is done, but I like collecting in time. Sir Alexander will not hesitate about the endowment—a thousand pounds will be required, which we shall give, of course, with the understanding that Barrington is presented to it. The parsonage will soon be begun. This will also be our gift, with the assistance of what the public charities give for that purpose, and for other unprovided expenses I have opened this shilling subscription. Allow me to add your name?"

Mrs. Hardy readily complied, and then Mrs. Barrington Martin gently whispered, "Don't prove me to be a worse beggar than mamma, you must grant me a similar favour. This subscription is for an organ

in my former parish church. Of course I must ever feel a lively interest in it. I used to teach the choir, but there are now so many difficulties, that nothing can secure that necessary part of divine service except an organ. It will be a grinding organ, the tunes are suited to a selection of hymns. These are the names of the tunes." And Mrs. Hardy read from a paper the following list :—

Zion,

Ebenezer,

Good Hope—(Rousseau's Dream),

Uction,

Consolation—(The Last Rose of Summer),

Miriam—(Ah ! Perdona),

Job—(Poor Mary Anne),

Dismissal,

and a great many others. Mrs. Hardy paid another shilling, and a compliment to the fair collector, but this last the lady earnestly declined.

"Oh no, dear, dear Mrs. Hardy, not a word of good works, if you please."

Once more in her carriage, enveloped in her comfortable furs, Mrs. Hardy felt unspeakably satisfied with her morning's work. Lady Martin so kind, so elegant, it was quite right for people in a certain station to surround themselves with what the world might call luxuries : and Mrs. Barrington Martin so plain, so serious, and so particular—of course that

was all so proper in the clergyman's wife. It was so delightful for men of good family to become clergy. The example was so good. Ah! the world would be a different thing if all people were like those she had seen to-day. Thus musing Mrs. Hardy reached her own door. Before night she had written a note to Mr. Lester.

DEAR SIR,—Although you know my opinions, I think it is necessary, for conscience sake, to make you more formally acquainted with them. In future I shall have the privilege of sitting under the teaching of Mr. Barrington Martin, from whose Gospel sermons I hope to derive advantages which are denied to the congregation of your church. I cannot conclude without assuring you that I shall always pray for you, that you may receive the true baptism, and that your eyes may be opened to see the truth.

Yours, in sincerity,

ELLEN HARDY.

Mrs. Hardy expected an answer—wished for an answer, but both in vain. She never received any.



CHAP. III.

ANOTHER BEGINNING.

We have, in the two previous chapters, tried to give some idea of the state of things at the time of our heroine's birth. It was not a happy time in the affairs of the establishment. The days had gone by when good old ladies observed the fasts and festivals distinguished in the English "Book of Common Prayer," when some even wore mourning during Lent, and places of public amusement were universally shut. These things, so good in their way, were called "remnants of Popery." The Catholics, not yet recovered from the depressing effects of the Penal laws, and still shut out from all places of civil trust and responsibility, were a dejected people, leading lives of resignation, oppressed by the degradations which had weighed on them so long. But now we must bring our readers rather suddenly to a different era; we must pass over eighteen years in our history, and see what change that time had wrought.

The most obvious fact is the womanhood of our heroine. Let her be imagined all that a young Eng-

lish gentlewoman need be, as to appearance, manner, and accomplishment. In religion she was of the High Church of the day, which meant a great deal more than did the High Church of the day we have been describing. She had gone through scenes and trials which had unusually matured her judgment, and steadied her character. Her mother had died when she was twelve years of age. Miss Worth had since that time lived at Seacombe, and been a mother to her as nearly as she could be. Herbert Stafford had become a man, and no longer lived with them. He was a curate in a neighbouring county. His love for his first friend had not decreased, on the contrary, it had been fully declared, and they were to be married as soon as Herbert was established in a living which his guardian had purchased for him. He also was of the High Church party of the day. And the accomplished rector of Seacombe had not stood still amid the general progress. He could scarcely be said to have changed his opinions—it would be more correct to say that his first principles had developed. He looked on the movement with great interest, yet was not very sanguine as to the result. He had not served his church for several years. A severe paralytic stroke which had for some time deprived him of the use of his limbs, but had not, in the smallest degree, affected his intellects, had obliged him to give up his parish duties. A very old and deservedly

esteemed friend, Mr. Russell, had accepted the curacy, and with his wife and mother added very much to Ella's happiness. Mr. Russell's principles were far superior to those of the (so-called) "Evangelicals," though he did not go the lengths of the Oxford divines. He was one who feared their doctrine, but yielded due admiration to their conduct. Ella was a frequent and a welcome guest at their house. Under Mr. Russell's direction she taught in the schools, and visited the sick and needy. Sometimes Mr. Russell would warn her against a too entire adoption of the "Oxford views," as they got to be called, but his warnings only made her ponder and examine, and a yet greater conviction and an enlarged stock of information was generally the result. But they all continued firm friends, and the affection which dwelt among them was sincere.

The Squire of Thornberry was deeply afflicted at his brother's seizure. He had often professed himself unable to bear up against the accumulated trials of his house. The death of Mrs. Edward Eynon had been a twofold grief. He had lost a friend who was always indulgent to him, and whom he really loved; and there was no longer any chance of a male heir to the property. On hearing of his brother's illness, he had immediately gone to see him, and the concealed goodness of his nature had fully burst forth. He was a different man ever after; and the joy and thankful-

ness which one little circumstance called forth made him a happier being for the remainder of his life. He was distressingly anxious to know if his brother's intellects were really as untouched as Miss Worth and his neice represented them to be. The rigid muscles of the face prevented his seeing there the answers to his inquiries. The arm was too dead to write them. Some children's wooden letters were brought, and before Mr. Eynon could repeat his questions, the poor invalid had begun to form a sentence, which, when finished, ran thus: "Second childhood, indeed."

The brother's heart overflowed with emotion, and perhaps the fondest embrace they had given each other since childhood, was given then. Recovery was slow, but an equable temper and a contented spirit made it sure. When Mr. Eynon returned to Thornberry, the alteration in his character was observed by all, and universally rejoiced in. He had seen real suffering, and had sympathised in real sorrow, and imaginary evils had lost their hold upon him. It was well that it was so, for soon his sympathies were again called forth. Mr. Lester was seized with an illness which proved fatal. Mr. Eynon, and his son, "young Harry Lester," by turns attended him, and though Mr. Eynon did not long survive, the happiness of his last few years was probably purer and truer than any he had ever enjoyed before.

On his death, Ella, her father and Miss Worth re-

moved to Thornberry. Mr. Eynon continued to be in a very delicate state of health, yet was not an object of immediate anxiety to those about him.

It had been one of the last actions of the late possessor of Thornberry to present Harry Lester to the living his father had possessed, to the joy of the parishioners generally, and the dismay of Mrs. Hardy.

That lady, although eighteen years had passed over her head since she was first introduced to our readers, was vigorous as ever. At sixty years of age she could walk and talk as she had done at forty, only with the additional advantage of being able to dogmatise a little more on the ground of *her long experience*. Far from participating in the general dislike of telling her age, she was proud of announcing it, and having become, since her increased intimacy with the family at Belle Vue, a person of rather more consequence in her own estimation she had a little fallen into a style, the reflection, on a smaller scale, of Lady Martin. Her back drawing-room had been more elegantly furnished, a bay window had been built, which projected into her pretty garden, and, seated there, she would often assure her morning callers—and no one surely ever received so many—that she had retired from the world, an assurance reiterated, even when her levée was so large as to oblige some of her visitors to remove by the window into the garden.

At Belle Vue eighteen years had wrought greater

changes. Sir Alexander was no more, and his still elegant widow, by the desire of her eldest son, to whom the title had descended, still lived there with her second son, his wife, and their three children. Lady Martin seldom visited, but duly received knowledge of the world without from her "evangelical" friends, and her power was felt through various channels, though she herself remained unseen. She had her favourite plans, and, though behind the scenes, lent a vigorous hand to any engine by which they might be prospered; and she had her favourite sorrows, the chief of which was that her son, the present Sir Alexander, who lived in London, and took rather an active part in those commercial affairs which had brought his father riches—" *was a mere moral character.*" But if her eldest son thus disappointed her maternal hopes, she surely had ample compensation in the character of her son Barrington, and in his wife. She positively gloried in them. The church in the park—the new church as it was still called—was now really to be consecrated. All this time it had been postponed, but people had talked, and at last the bishop had gently interfered, and the thing was to be done. It was quite a sacrifice to the times. Principles could not be carried out to their fullest length at once. But more scriptural days were hoped for, when all such forms and ceremonies should be cast aside. Altogether, however,

Lady Martin felt, that, under her son's care, "the Gospel" had been wonderfully spread. A great opponent had been found in Mr. Lester, but he certainly had not Barrington's gift in preaching, or in applying consolation to the sinner: indeed, Mr. Lester's views, on many subjects, were openly Popish, and it had become their painful duty at Belle Vue to bring his unfaithfulness in these matters before the people, which certainly had occasioned some bad feeling, and many reproaches for their want of charitable feeling, forgetting, as Lady Martin used to say—"Forgetting, poor creatures, that we must have religion *first pure, then peaceable.*"

Mr. Barrington Martin had three children. The first a Hebe-looking girl of sixteen, had discovered, and not wrongly, that her person was too pretty to be made a dowdy of, and that, with her light and graceful form, she could dance without being taught. She openly professed her dislike of long sermons and expositions, and laughed when she ought to have looked grave at Reformation meetings. She was too merry, good tempered, and pretty, to be lectured, and truly a more captivating little reprobate was never seen. The son was at a school conducted on new principles—no punishments were used, and brotherly love was professedly the one impulse for the attainment of all desirable ends. In the person of Master Marmaduke it certainly had not answered, so the dis-

appointed parents mourned over two "unconverted children." The third and youngest had been modelled more to their wishes; she was the wonder of the house, and, truly, one of the wonders of the age. She was a little walking text-book, and had prattled to her doll in Scripture phrases. For her the mother had laboured with head and heart, and for her she had become an authoress. Little Madeline had learnt solely from her mother's writings. Her mother had written at first solely for her, but so good an advertisement had the young lady proved, that the sale of books had become general, and quite taken the place of shilling subscriptions. And what effects had eighteen years produced at Monkton? For the first few years things had gone on with their usual stillness there. The solitary priest still passed the Abbey walls and the parsonage garden when business took him to Thornberry, and once or twice a year a card, with Mrs. Monkton's name on it, was found on the tables of her country neighbours. But soon the Catholic Emancipation Bill passed, on the 10th of April, 1829, and the half-dormant energies of the house were roused. A holiday was given to the labourers and servants, and all the Catholic tenantry were invited to a feast. Mrs. Monkton's carriage was soon at the door of the haberdasher's shop, and Mrs. Hardy, who was there, wondered to see whole pieces of lilac printed calico, and good white shirting

purchased and carried off. But the mystery was soon solved. Tents arose on the lawn at Monkton, and they were covered with the coloured calico, and long white table-cloths of "shirting" were spread on the tables within them. All eat and drank, and were satisfied. Some friends, to the still greater astonishment of the neighbours, for Mrs. Monkton was not supposed to have any friends—some friends, Catholic friends, assisted in waiting on the people, and when three cheers had been given for the Catholic Emancipation Bill, three for Mrs. Monkton, and three times three for the Pope, the tents were quickly dismantled, and their temporary coverings torn up into lengths for gowns and frocks, while the men's shirts were cut from the table-cloths. No one went away empty-handed. In the neighbourhood various feelings were excited. Mr. Lester shook the Priest warmly by the hand when next he saw him, and the first Protestant meeting was held in the school-room at Belle Vue. From this time, to the death of the late Mr. Eynon, no unusual excitement had arisen at Monkton. The chapel and school were attended with the accustomed punctuality, and though some had been brought back to the fold from which, under temptation, they had wandered, few, if any, converts had been made.

Thus stood affairs in the vicinity of Thornberry, when Ella and her father entered on it as their home, and with them they soon became acquainted, through

the usual medium of morning calls. Mrs. Monkton did not call, but she wrote a note to Mr. Eynon, expressing some friendly feelings on his coming to reside on the property of his ancestors, and asking permission to walk through his woods, as her household had been permitted to do by his brother. She added, that she was too much of an invalid to call immediately on Miss Eynon, but hoped to do herself that pleasure at some future time. To this a polite reply was returned, the requested permission was granted, and Mr. Eynon assured Mrs. Monkton that his daughter would be happy to make her acquaintance.



CHAP. IV.

THORNBERRY ABBEY.

Ella had visited Thornberry as a child, but had not seen it for many years before she came with her father to make it her future home. Many of the happy associations of childhood were connected with the place her family so fondly loved, but now she admired it with the improved taste of maturer years, and the respectful affection she had always felt for the home of her ancestors, burst forth into an exceeding and grateful love.

Thornberry was a place well calculated to produce such sensations—few places could boast of a greater air of respectability. The house was built in the reign of Elizabeth, and was of the form, introduced in the romance of the day, as resembling the first letter of her name. It was of the better specimens of the debased style, and it now wore a time-honoured aspect which commanded respect. The long, wide stone-mullioned windows were ornamented with the Tudor rose and fleur-de-lys in the returns of their canopies, and over the low arch of the entrance door

in the centre of the building, was the escocheon, carved with the family arms. The panelled hall was decorated with antlers of the deer once kept in the spacious park. And over the large and massive fireplace was a suit of the heavy and ill-wrought armour of the period. The rooms were low and the ceilings stucco, vaulted and adorned with pendants. Pictures of Ella's forefathers and her fair ancestresses hung about, in all varieties of costume, from the long-bodied gown, stiff skirt, and wide-spreading ruff of the first lady of Thornberry, to the more objectionable fanciful attire of the shepherdess of the last century.

The view from the house was confined. Indeed it was limited by the long avenue of still, stately trees by which the mansion was approached ; but at a short distance from the house a scene met the eye which, for beauty and picturesque effect, was, perhaps, never surpassed. Overlooking a long stretch of sloping green, the sight was bounded on the right by a steep hill side, thickly wooded ; as it met the lawn the trees became gradually more scattered, till each standing alone formed a distinct picture in itself. A small but rapid river, which had worn its cataract way down the side of this wooded hill was heard in the distance, and seen sparkling as it wound among the spreading trees, then turning out of sight it passed under a single arched bridge which was the left boundary of the scene. Just in the centre, yet

almost hidden among the foliage, towered the remains of Thornberry Abbey. Ella's mind would have been alive to such beauties in any place, and under any circumstances ; but looking at them as now her father's—one day to be her own—she felt sensations of affection and responsibility hitherto unknown. For the first few weeks these feelings were general, and could not be brought to bear particularly on her conduct. She made herself acquainted with the house and its arrangements ; she followed her father through the rooms, and listened to the interesting histories which were attached to some of them. Then gardens and pleasure grounds had their turn, and she liked those old-fashioned terraces better than any thing which more modern taste would have substituted. The labourers and poor dependants had to be visited. Her exertions in her father's parish, under her kind friend Mr. Russell, had admirably fitted her for this part of her duties, and, therefore, but one opinion was formed of her ; she was “a dear young lady.” Sweet summer days they were ; happy hours spent in seeing new scenes of loveliness, and in finding new objects on whom to bestow happiness and independence. Miss Worth was still the kind and judicious friend, and, with her, Ella could leave her father in comfort and confidence, while Herbert Stafford, who was their guest for the first few weeks, wandered with her through the woods and meads,

No creatures were ever more happy, for they were virtuous and sincere. The ruins of the Abbey were very naturally the first object of interest to them. In happier and holier times Thornberry Abbey had been a house of Cistercian monks. At the dissolution of monasteries in Henry the VIII's reign, the establishment had been broken up, the monks dispersed, and their plate and other valuables made forfeit to the Crown. Many of the monks—some of age and as many of grief—died before the days of Catholic Mary's reign. When that season of hope dawned on England—that season which saw us again nationally united with Rome, the centre of Catholic unity—the good monks who had survived their troubles and distress, again congregated within the walls of their stately Abbey. Very different were their circumstances, for there was little of the silver and gold which had awakened the appetite of the greedy monarch, with whom, however, nothing seemed to prosper, for he was ever grasping and always poor.

But this was small sorrow to the re-united brethren. Vowed to holy poverty themselves, they had only cherished their property for the greater dignity of God's service, and now they had better gifts to offer,—the patient, willing, faithful sufferings they had endured for HIM. Each one brought a heart which had been tried and not found wanting. Again the monks were seen toiling hard with fervency of

spirit, that by their manual labour, the once flourishing gardens and corn land might again afford them the necessaries required for their daily sustenance. And through the mercy of God and the prayers of their Patroness, our Blessed Lady, success for a time attended their exertions. Once more the early matin bell was heard, and the sweet chaunting of the Psalms before day had began to dawn ; and such sounds, though so proper to that spot, and constantly heard for so many years, after the interval of silence, terrible both in its cause and effect, came with a solemnity almost supernatural to those who dwelt around ; and many were the gifts of corn and fruit, and such other things as the rule permitted, to cheer the holy brotherhood and welcome them to their own again. But the sweet round of holy services, from matins to compline, was soon to cease at Thornberry, and it seemed, for ever. The reign of Elizabeth began, and all the miserable doings which attended it. Again the Abbey of Thornberry was taken possession of, and the monks turned forth upon the world ; and in the course of a few years the Abbey fell into the hands of one of those unenviable favourites who thus neither wanted power, temptation, nor example, to soil his hands with sacrilege. The example of Bishop Barlow was felt at Thornberry. He who had nearly destroyed St. David's, ruined Llawhaddon, and alienated the property of Bath and Wells, had established

a precedent which many were too willing to follow. Barlow's five daughters, who all married Protestant Bishops, the offspring of his marriage with Agatha Welsbourne, a nun, himself being a monk, and once Prior of Bisham, in Berkshire, had had their dowries paid from the sale of the lead off the cathedral of St. David's, and other like instances, and far worse instances, of Church spoliation.

Thornberry Abbey fell into some such hands as these, and the consequences were a neglected Church, a spoliated Abbey, and a handsome mansion built chiefly from the ruins of this religious house. This had passed, by indirect courses, through many hands, till it had come to be the inheritance of our heroine.

Not much of the original building of the Abbey was left ; but the fine east window of the decorated date, with its ball flower ornament, was almost perfect, and might have formed a model for the most fastidious architect. There was the "Lady Chapel," now all unroofed, but the wall still showed where the altar had stood ; and broken pillars marked the nave, though the side walls were almost even with the ground. Here and there might be traced an altar tomb, but few thought of who lay beneath, or how little the pious, peaceful monk could have supposed, when living, that cattle would have grazed around his tomb. Such was the case one lovely morning when Herbert and Ella visited the Abbey. They lost

no time in driving them away, and agreed to ask Mr. Eynon to have a fence made to keep them out in future.

Where was the high altar ? asked Ella. Herbert pointed out the place, and both remarked that the ground was much raised about the part ; and, of course, the next thing was a mutual desire to take away the soil, and see if the sanctuary part, which correctly is the floor of the altar, remained. Herbert said he should not like to set any of the labourers about it, but that Lester and he could satisfy themselves ; and the following day was fixed on for the attempt. They were now going to return, but passing "the Lady Chapel" they saw, with some surprise, a dignified looking elderly man, who was walking up and down, and seemed to be too intent on the book he was reading to observe their approach. Natural good taste made them hesitate, and in that moment they were perceived. The gentleman closed his book and advanced. He addressed Miss Eynon, and briefly said he was the Catholic priest who lived at Monkton. That having had permission to walk by the Abbey road to Thornberry, he had sometimes ventured to linger in scenes which were so interesting. "Indeed," he added, "I tell you candidly, I stay here sometimes and say my office in the Chapel of our Blessed Lady, and I was so occupied just now." Both Herbert and Ella were pleased with their new

acquaintance, and some further conversation ensued. They spoke of the cattle in the desecrated nave and round the tomb.

“We were speaking of putting a fence round the entire ruin,” said Herbert, “anything to preserve it from greater desecration; and we were talking of the high altar. The mould is so high there that I think it extremely probable that the floor of the altar may be preserved; and we intend to induce Mr. Lester to help us to make the discovery. If you usually visit the ruin at this hour, you may find us here to-morrow busy at the work.”

“I do not come here daily, or with any punctuality, but I am much interested in what you propose, and shall like to watch its progress.” Then, thanking Herbert, Mr. Vernon took his leave of Ella.

Mr. Eynon consented to the building of the fence, and quite entered into its propriety. The very next day preparations commenced, and Herbert, Lester, and Ella, went alone to the Abbey to execute their part of the plan. Mr. Vernon was there before them. They found him in the Lady Chapel, with his breviary in his hand. He assisted at the work with great interest; the fact was, as Herbert had expected. They came down to an exquisite tessellated pavement, the absolute floor of the altar. Not contented with roughly clearing away the mould, they determined to wash the floor clean; and this, after

the necessary delay, was cleverly accomplished. Admiration and satisfaction were earnestly expressed, till Ella, stepping aside, said, "Oh, this is too holy a place for me to talk so freely in. It was the sanctuary. Come, Herbert, come here; I feel quite afraid of adding to its desecration." The two friends moved to her side with looks of approbation; but Mr. Vernon appeared exceedingly surprised. "Do members of the Anglican Church feel thus towards their altars, he asked?" Lester replied, that many did not; indeed, that some argued against the idea of the chancel being in any sense more sacred than any other part of the Church. "But," he added, "these are times when you must not inquire what *members of our Church* feel; but what our Church herself feels, what she *desires to inculcate*, not what too many of her children *presume to believe*."

"I comprehend the distinction," replied Mr. Vernon, "but never knew till now that your Church inculcated the correct feeling Miss Eynon has displayed. It exists in my Church, as you are probably aware; but there it arises from a doctrine on which I believe we differ." There was a moment's pause; for each of the party felt a holy awe of the subject on which they were verging. But soon Herbert replied by saying, he believed that "if Anglicans and Catholics were to inquire more into each other's principles, they would find many supposed differences

vanish. I do not," he said, "think that Anglicans would become Romanists; but I think that many Romanists would, on examination, see the unreal position they hold in this country, and no longer place themselves in an antagonistic position towards that party who are a branch of the true Church as well as themselves. Now, for instance," he continued, "with respect to the sacred subject to which you have alluded, the Eucharist, you would not find the Church of England differed from the Church of Rome."

"Do you believe as I do," asked Mr. Vernon, in great surprise.

"I do," was said by each of the trio in turn. "Have either of you the Anglican Book of Common Prayer about you?" Each of the young clergymen produced one; and, turning to the Communion Service, they read, with great reverence, many parts which substantiated their assertion; and answered earnestly and fervently in the affirmative, when Mr. Vernon plainly asked if a man could believe in the Real Presence and remain in the Church of England. Lester offered Mr. Vernon his Prayer-book as a gift. He took it, yet said he had studied it once, and would now look at it again, but—and he smiled—from another motive. Thus they parted; and as the three friends walked home, they spoke with great pleasure of the agreeable and candid manners of the Priest.

“What a scandal such people as Barrington Martin must be to him,” said Lester. “Oh, not half such a scandal as you would be to Mr. Martin if he could know that in such Popish precincts you had talked to a priest,” said Ella ; and having reached the house they entered to acquaint Mr. Eynon and Miss Worth with the success of their labours. The Abbey walls were soon encircled with an iron fence, the gate of which was always kept locked ; but two keys were sent to Monkton, and the civility acknowledged by a note from Mr. Vernon, and a call from Mrs. Monkton. Ella was out when the old lady came, and looked at her card with some regret in consequence.

Herbert now returned to his curacy, and Ella entered on the duties of her station with industry and propriety. She had always been the most dutiful and affectionate of daughters, and under Miss Worth’s teaching she was becoming a good and prudent housewife. The school she visited under Mr. Lester’s direction, and in the same way assisted in the management of the parochial charities, while her own kind heart, and her good father’s teaching, made her a bountiful benefactress to the poor around her. One trial she now experienced, and she felt it to be a great one. Herbert Stafford became dangerously ill, and, although he recovered, the medical men were positive in recommending total relinquishment of parish duties, and, if possible, a residence in a

warmer climate for two years. Italy was fixed on as the place of his banishment. It was the place best calculated to solace him for so long an absence from his intended wife ; and though Ella felt all that an affectionate woman could feel on such an occasion, the sight of his pale cheek and reduced appearance made her sufficiently heroic not to betray all she felt for an absence she knew to be necessary. She secretly wished herself his wife that she might go with him ; but that not being the case, she contented herself with hoping that less than two years' banishment would be sufficient, and the promised comfort of constant correspondence, and the fact of his being accompanied by an attached friend, enabled her to say, "Farewell," with as much bravery as was desirable. Still, there was a blank, and books were resorted to—the books Herbert had valued—to fill it up ; and walks to the Abbey, where they had been so busy together, and where so much had been done at his suggestion, were certainly more frequent than to any other place.



CHAP. V.

THE SKETCH.

One particularly bright day reminded Ella of her sketch-book, and she proceeded to the Abbey to make its ruins her subject. Going there she met Mr. Lester, who became her companion; and while she outlined and coloured, he read aloud from a book he had in his pocket. In a short time Mr. Vernon appeared, and he, too, had his book. There was a pleasant greeting, and when Mr. Vernon's book was seen to be the Anglican book of Common Prayer which Lester had given him, his opinion of it was earnestly asked, and, as he took his seat on an accommodating looking stone which Ella had pointed out for that purpose, he replied, that he thought it "a very extraordinary book indeed."

"But you must not think it so very extraordinary," said Ella, "because the Pope would have authorised it, had not he and Queen Elizabeth quarrelled."

"Miss Eynon," replied the Priest, *if* that story, which I know is often told, has any foundation on fact, for it cannot be itself the fact, it is so slight,

that it would be difficult to trace it. His Holiness *might*, of course, with certain conditions, authorise the prayers in the morning and evening service, because, of these, some are direct translations from the Catholic offices, others are not uncatholic, or, at all events, capable, by very small alterations, of being made fully Catholic ; but the " Communion Service," and a number of other things which I find in this volume, the Church *could never* authorise, and I cannot conceal my surprise that you should appear to be satisfied with it—holding the opinion of "the unbloody sacrifice" as you do. You must forgive my warmth ; I am sure you will not be surprised with my speaking rather hardly of that which your own ' Scotch Episcopal Church ' rejected in 1637, and your ' Episcopal American Church ' also rejected in the last century."

" I scarcely understand you," said Ella.

" You see, Miss Eynon, that there is no mention in the Communion Service, *at any proper place*, of a sacrifice of any kind. Therefore, I feel that those who argue that the Church of England merely makes a commemoration, have right reason on their side ; but *after* the distributing of the bread and the cup, when all is over, you have the only prayer which looks like oblation, beginning—' O Lord and heavenly Father, we, thy humble servants, entirely desire thy Fatherly goodness mercifully to accept this our sacrifice of

praise, &c.' In the Scotch Church I find this prayer *precedes* the consecration. Your service has, as I said just now, been rejected whenever it has been examined, even by your own non-jurors. And, although the 'article' on the Eucharist has been explained so as to suit your feelings, yet I find at the close of your service an assertion that 'the sacramental bread and wine remain still in their very natural substances.' "

"What do you say to this, Lester?" asked Ella.

"What Mr. Vernon says is true, in fact. Indeed, Bishop Overall used to say that the misplacing of that prayer was a printer's oversight; I am not of that opinion, however. I fear that the desire of our Reformers so much tended towards the taking into the Church the largest possible body of differing persons, that it was done advisedly, so that on the one extreme people might call it a commemoration, and on the other a true 'unbloody sacrifice.' Such conduct I cannot defend. It has doubtless been the cause of all that latent heresy in the body of our Church, which is far more dangerous to her than any open enemy. It is of no avail to avoid the miserable truth that there are many parties in our Church, and two great ones—ourselves and the so-called Evangelicals—who are in terrible opposition to each other, each of us declaring that we speak the voice of the Church. Which of us may say this with the most consistency

we shall not any of us dispute. It is objected against us that we tend towards that Communion, whose errors—Mr. Vernon must forgive my plain speaking—whose errors gave rise to the English Reformation, and which my Church, at that time, cast off. I do not desire to defend that public demonstration; on the contrary, I lament from my heart many of its doings. I see that it has been the mother of heresy, and that, owing to the miserable expediency of those times, we have no power to cleanse ourselves from it. But the Church of England exists, and I, by the providence of God, have had my lot cast within her, and now am one of her appointed ministers. It is my duty, then, to live according to the spirit of her laws, and if these laws are so expressed as to protect traitors to her spirit, I cannot but lament it, but, in my pity, love her even more. Misguided men have surrounded her with troubles enough. Let her faithful children, then, render her double respect, lest she be for ever dishonoured.” He proceeded with greater energy, and chiefly addressing Miss Eynon—“ If some say that Baptism is only a ceremony, *let us* be more than ever zealous to call it regeneration; and when the blessed Eucharist is treated as a mere commemoration, let *us* more faithfully declare it to be a true propitiatory but unbloody sacrifice—the *body, soul, and divinity of our Lord.*”

Mr. Lester stopped, and Mr. Vernon, out of evident

respect, made no reply, and there was a pause of a few moments, which Ella broke, by saying,

"You must think better of us, Mr. Vernon ; there are not *so many* points of difference, and I have a happy hope, that if Catholics and Anglicans were to know each other's principles really well, the union of the Churches would not be altogether a Utopian scheme." Mr. Vernon bowed, and said that he was as much interested in the new Anglican party in England as Miss Eynon could desire.

"It is not altogether *new*," said Lester. "It is new as a recognised party, but the Church of England has never been without her testifiers to the truths we hold. For instance, the Real Presence has been held, though not generally, yet so as to show that it never passed from the Church. However smothered by heresy, still it has existed. Bishop Jeremy Taylor advocated the Catholic custom of receiving the Sacrament fasting.* Then, as to the matter of the Eucharist, both Church and State have agreed that it *ought to be* the wafer.† Archbishop Parker writes : 'Most part of Protestants think it meet to be in wafer bread, *as the injunction prescribes*. Divers others, I cannot tell of what spirit, would have the

* Bishop Jeremy Taylor's "Ductor Dubitantium," book III., chap. iv., rule xv., p. 63^a, folio edition.

† "Strype's Parker," book IV., chap. xxxv.

loaf bread.' And, still writing of the loaf bread, he says, 'Which is rather a toleration in necessities than a plain ordering, as it is in the injunction.' And it is a fact related in the life of Robert Burton, the author of the 'Anatomy of Melancholy,' that he always gave the Sacrament in wafers. Bishop Andrewes is known to have mixed water with the wine: so it may be said of other things. Truth has never been *lost* in the Anglican Church. By the Divine blessing MANY have of late been stirred up to testify in its favour, and if formerly truth slept, she never died or remained so still as not to give indication of life. Again, I may instance the so-called 'apocryphal books' of Scripture with Archbishop Whitgift:* 'I chuse to say, that the Scripture here called Apocrypha abusively and improperlie, are Holy Writings, voyd of error, parte of the Bible, and soe accounted of in the purest tyme of the Church, and by the best writers—ever redd in the Church of Christ, and shall never be forbidden by me, or by my consent.' Again, on the subject of confession, what you call the Sacrament of penance, I say, with our Book of Common Prayer, that it is 'a godly discipline' that, punished in this world,

* Archbishop Whitgift's reply to a Puritan set of articles, entitled "Means how to settle a godly and charitable quietness in the Church, &c., offered to the Archbishop."—Strype's Whitgift Records, No. XVI., p. 79, folio edition,

souls might 'be saved in the Day of the Lord,' and 'that the said discipline may be restored again is much to be wished;' for, as we read in Burnet,* in this point the reformation of the Church wants some parts of its finishing in the government and discipline of it. Under such authorities, and ordered by the Church to recommend confession as a preparation for death, I make no scruple to recommend it at other times; because, in the first place, we can never do wrong to do what prepares us for an event which may happen any moment, and because, in the second place, we shall be more likely to have this blessing secured to us, when people, by happy experience, are acquainted with its sacramental character. But it is of no use to multiply such instances. The acknowledged indistinctness of our Church language, makes the cause of the 'Evangelicals' appear only too good; but those who desired to follow the spirit as well as the word, will find that they can do the former without injury to the latter. They, and they alone, can, in justness and fairness, be called the children of the Anglican Church."

Mr. Vernon had listened with deep attention, and Ella with admiration. Lester now proposed returning, and his companion could not refuse; for the

* Burnet's "History of the Reformation," part II., book 3, vol. ii., pp. 629, 630.—Nares's edition.

sketch had long been laid aside, and her whole attention given to more interesting matters. She, therefore, replaced her papers in the portfolio.

"You appear to hold Roman doctrine in a very great measure," said Mr. Vernon.

"I hope I do *in all essentials*," replied Lester, "as all members of the Catholic Church should do. Good morning"—and they parted.

The sketch of the Abbey was continued at home, and often, as Ella was bringing it to a conclusion, her mind recurred to what had passed between Mr. Vernon and Lester beneath the Abbey walls. She wished that Herbert had been there, for some thoughts had occurred to her which Mr. Lester could not satisfactorily set at rest; on the whole, however, she was fully convinced. The interpretation put on some of the articles by her party was, certainly, painful to her; "but the fault lies with them who compiled them," she said to herself, "not with those who now have the thankless task of giving them their interpretation; surely, if it be an historical fact, that our articles were made thus elastic in language for expediency sake, we have full right to all the benefits we can gain, for we assuredly suffer the sorrowful penalty." Again, she would argue, that, although she wished for more consistent teaching, for articles more plainly worded, and for discipline better enforced, yet that the Anglican was a true Church, and

that all difficulties were the cross her members had to bear. "It is only a fit penalty for the national unfaithfulness in days gone by," thought Ella. "Thank God, she is still a Church, and I must bring my will into obedience with the will of God, who placed me in her. Happily, I have no choice; I am placed in the Anglican branch of the Catholic Church. To desert my appointed mother, who has nursed me, reared me, and in whose arms I have been blest, can never be contemplated." And then Ella's mind turned to the happy hope, that the party which had lately arisen in the Establishment, might be God's appointed means for its renovation in faith and in discipline; and how thankful she felt that her lot had been cast among them. Sometimes her father, and sometimes Miss Worth, was the depository of thoughts and hopes like these. They listened and agreed; and each built up the other in patience, perseverance, faith, and hope.

Miss Worth was her companion, and such had been the subject of their conversation, while Ella drew, and each window and pillar reminded her of something said by Lester or Mr. Vernon, or of some reflection which had sprung up in her own mind, when Mr. Vernon was shewn into the room.

Of course the drawing reminded him of their conversation, and, after expressing his interest in its progress, he said so.

"And I," replied Ella, "think of very little else

during the time I work at it. Drawings always remind us of what occurred in connexion with them. But you must not talk of those things now, Mr. Vernon; you would have too great an advantage over us poor ladies."

"But if you are thinking of little else, and I am thinking of little else, how hard to make the thing which occupies our minds a prohibited subject?"

"Very hard, but very prudent," said Ella.

"Prudent," echoed Mr. Vernon in a tone of surprise.

"Yes, Mr. Vernon, prudent," repeated Ella, "Catholics—Roman Catholics—are very interesting people. I acknowledge their many advantages, and I am afraid of being led to contrast them with certain disadvantages which it is my lot to bear, but to which, nevertheless, I am quite alive. Thus, as it is my duty to cultivate patience, and a strong believing hope, I am sure it is *prudent* to avoid what might make me impatient and despairing. I should not be afraid," she added, smiling, "of anything Mr. Barrington Martin could say, but I confess to being quite afraid of you."

"Then let me advocate the cause of Mr. Barrington Martin," said Mr. Vernon. "Let me plead the cause of the Evangelicals. May I, Miss Worth? Pray, Miss Eynon, let me try to make you an Evangelical."

Ella and Miss Worth laughed, and so did Mr.

Vernon; but he persevered in saying he thought the Evangelical cause ought to be pleaded, and in telling Miss Eynon to name any article on which she thought them to blame, that he might be their apologist; but she laughed, and refused, saying, however, that Mr. Vernon might say all in their favour that he could say, although she would not fix on the points to be vindicated. "For, indeed," said she, "I should scarcely know where to begin."

"Then my apology must be general," said Mr. Vernon, "and, having your leave, I must contend that there is very good ground for their defence. The Articles of the Church of England, by your own shewing, were formed to take in many parties; why, then, should they be excluded? If this is historically true, let them, as well as others, reap the advantage. They have certainly many of the bishops on their side, while you have not one; and that is no small testimony to their view of what is right. On their side, also, were the Reformers of the Established Church; and they claim all the glory and evidence which martyrdom can give. 'Our Protestant Forefathers' is their watchword—the cause for which those forefathers yielded liberty and life, that is their boast. Such Protestant forefathers struck out from the Liturgy the very things for which you are contending; and in their hands, and such as theirs, the Book of Common Prayer was un-Catho-

licised, as far as was possible consistently with the expediency of their views. Thus, now, the Evangelicals glory in the past protesting acts of their church, and glory in those who achieved them. Is not this more consistent than to apologise for them? More consistent than to say of the Reformers that you 'think worse and worse of them?' Your party, in their published writings, say, that 'the Episcopalians did not claim *jus divinum*; indeed, Elizabeth and her party considered *her* as the origin of ecclesiastical power;' which is quite true; and this fact, I think, strengthens the Evangelical cause. If you object, that such were party feelings and party doings; that *might* made *right* for a time, but that still such were not the principles of what you call 'the Church,' then I appeal to the general feeling about things; and in the absence of all authoritative explanation of the true meaning of the Church, I think this may be allowed. Is it, then, to be supposed, that every possible discouragement to fulfilling the intentions of the Church of England, has, up to this time, been permitted; and that, in carrying out what you believe those intentions to be, you are met with the accumulated difficulties of three centuries? You are very strong in your endeavours to carry out the High Church feelings about baptism. For this, old Catholic fonts have been brought to light from hidden and neglected corners, and even from ladies'

flower-gardens, where they have served as stands for violets; and in the island of Jersey your exertions would have to be still greater, for there fonts in churches are absolutely unknown. And why? Because the principles of the Reformation were more perfectly carried out there. In Queen Elizabeth's reign the Geneva doctrines were established in the islands; and remained so till about 1620. There, also, the result of this same Reformation, you never see any altar in the churches; a table occasionally brought into the middle aisle serves their purposes.

All this is very shocking. The English Evangelicals themselves would disapprove of it. But if such things, in one part of the jurisdiction of the Establishment, are *the existing results* of the measures of the Reformers, and if feelings corresponding to these things also exist, may not the Evangelical party claim perfect toleration for their comparatively far higher Church principles? May not the Evangelical party under your Bishop of Winchester, claim to be the followers of true wisdom, with 'Anglican Catholicism' on one side, and the Calvinism of the Islands on the other? all in one diocese, under one bishop, and all three parties of the Established Church of England. Have I said enough? Are you almost an Evangelical, Miss Eynon?"

"No, Mr. Vernon, because their doctrines are wrong. However miserably deficient our discipline

may be, and however bad discipline may lead to dereliction of doctrine, yet, true doctrine I must hold, and I am thankful that, if my Church does not enforce the truth, yet she encourages it. But with your feelings, Mr. Vernon, I think you are inconsistent in liking the 'High Church' party, as we are obliged to call ourselves, better than the Evangelicals. With such views as yours, they must appear the more consistent."

"Not so," he replied, "I certainly feel you to be in an inconsistent position. To go on with what I was saying. You profess an obedience to your Bishops, which, under certain circumstances, you could scarcely carry out. More than one of your Bishops have pronounced against your view of the doctrines mentioned in 'the Articles.' What is to be said in such a case? The answer is, that his opinion is only that of one Bishop. That the opinion of an individual on such a subject is not obligatory; that the opinion of the Church alone imposes an obligation. But when we ask what is the opinion of the Church, we are told that the Church of England has never given any; and that to discover the meaning of the Reformed Church's Articles, Catholic antiquity has been consulted. Yet, certainly, neither the men who drew up the articles, the State who authorised them, or the people who received them, could have had much real veneration for Catholic an-

tiquity, or much knowledge of it, perhaps. But no inconsistency, however great, on your side, can blind me to the vital errors of the other party. In fact, Miss Eynon, I respect you, not only because you respect us, but because you hold the true doctrine of Justification and Sanctification, and also the true doctrine of the Trinity and the Incarnation; because you have not fallen into the Nestorian heresy, now so prevalent in this country; firmly held, I lament to say, by many who are unconscious of their sin. It is certain that numbers of the people, and even of the clergy, are Nestorians. They do not believe in their hearts that Jesus was God. They have a sensation that God lowered himself to something less than God when he became man; they do not realize that he took the manhood into God. From this comes their denial of devotion to our Blessed Lady. They do not believe her the most wonderful of all created beings, and perfectly pure, *and they need not believe it according to their faith*; for if they do not believe that God dwelt in her, they need not believe her to be that inconceivable being, purposely created to contain him; they need not believe her to be "the fair Bride of the Canticles," and "the Church's diadem," if they refuse to call her "Mother of God," but use, as they do, Nestorius's own words, and only say "Mother of Christ." It is certain, that in their blind zeal against us, who pay all honour

possible to the Blessed Virgin, under Divine honour, they have fallen into Nestorianism; for if they believed that He who she brought forth was God, then they would not refuse to say, in the words of a holy writer, that "God might easily have made a more beautiful firmament and a greener earth; but it was not possible to make a higher mother than the Virgin Mary; and in her formation there has been conferred on mere creatures, *all the glory of which THEY ARE CAPABLE, remaining mere creatures.* Thus, Miss Eynon, I am not inconsistent, I like your party best, because they are not Nestorians."

"On the one hand, you bring a very serious charge; on the other, you bestow but negative praise," said Ella—but, before she could go on, Miss Worth observed that she thought the conversation had reached the utmost limits of that prudence which was to be the guardian of the morning's talk. Of course, Mr. Vernon did not resume the subject after this suggestion.



CHAP. VI.

THORNBERRY CHURCH.

Time wore on—the summer had closed, and a beautiful autumn had set in. Herbert Stafford had been absent six months, and his friends at Thornberry longed for his return. Two years had been spoken of as the term of his relaxation. But would he really be away all that time? Ella had asked that question of herself many times, and something had always whispered, No. His letters were full and long, and punctual in their arrival, and his interest in all things connected with Thornberry acute as ever. He wrote of the house, the Abbey, the parish, the fine old church; and he detailed all he had seen, and the effects produced on a mind reasoning, reflecting, and yet teachable like his own. Foreign architecture had arrested his attention, and the service in the foreign churches. He spoke of their early Angelus bell at six o'clock, being each day his first salutation, and of the constant masses from that hour till mid-day. He also mentioned the beautiful fact, now seen for the first time, that the Catholic Church

abroad was the church of *the people*. That, whereas, in England they were almost forced into "meeting houses;" on the continent it seemed as if the churches and cathedrals had been built, in a great measure, for poverty and childhood. Herbert had also described some vestments of considerable age, beautifully ornamented with needlework, which English ladies should learn some lessons from, to aid them in their part of church restoration. All that Herbert said had weight. His character was of that firm and truthful kind, and his judgment so clear and correct, that weight and interest attached to all he said; and if Ella thought more of constant services and a religious poor than she had ever done before, it was Herbert who had struck the key note to her sweet imaginings. She often talked with her father on such topics—"Shall we ever accomplish the re-folding of the poor?" Mr. Eynon would grieve that the people had got so far beyond the reach of the Church, and, with a yearly increasing population, how could a man hope, unless he were more romantic than reasonable? But Lester *did* hope: he hoped for the restoration of monastic institutions. That, he said, and that alone, could reach the case of the poor. He never read of their religious destitution, too well confirmed, alas! in Parliamentary annals, without an earnest prayer for Monastic Institutions, pictured holy brethren and meek sisters spending themselves

in the cause of Christ, and by the devotion of their lives, their prayers, their alms, and their strong faith, by the grace of God, again evangelising England. Till we are blessed with something of this sort, he would say, I can see no reasonable hope of our country being blessed with a religious and Christian population. Then Ella's thoughts turned to the old Abbey, and she loved it more than before, and wished a more sparing hand had been employed for the work of correction which, not the system, but the misconducting of the system, had rendered necessary. So thought Ella. She had not then realised that avarice and reckless profanity had laid those high places low, and not the unwilling hand of wholesome correction. Mr. Lester was well read in monastic history, and corrected Ella's ideas on those matters. He felt that, circumstanced as her family had been, and as she was as their representative, that the subject was a delicate one, more fit for Herbert than for him to perform, but he said what justice required, and convinced Ella, by references to good authorities, that he was right. From this time her mind was more than ever occupied to do all in her power to strengthen the arms of the Church, that she might embrace, in love and charity, her wide extended family; walks to the church Abbey, and from the Abbey to the fine old parish church of Thornberry, were of almost daily recurrence. At the Abbey speculations were indulged as to what

might arise there when the Anglican Church should be raised from her desolation, for the glory and the blessing of the land; but at the Church greater realities were going forward. Since Mr. Eynon's arrival at Thornberry, the Church had undergone much restoration; and all through the summer it had been a source of the deepest interest to Ella. The old Church was a fine edifice, like so many which were raised by the pious labours of our Catholic forefathers. It had formerly been attached to the Abbey, and had been served by the Cistercian brothers; and the exterior was Catholic as ever, though within there had been sad havoc at the "Reformation." In the late Mr. Lester's time everything necessary to good repair, and neatness and cleanliness, had been strictly attended to. It was his son's happy task to attempt some sort of restoration to a more Catholic appearance. All of which was certainly in strict propriety and good taste. In appearance there was now some consistency between the building and its furnishing. The stranger who had gazed with admiring scrutiny on the architecture, which was decorated throughout, had marked the rich windows with the ball flower ornament, and the excellent beauty of the western porch—had counted with interest the dedication crosses inserted on the walls, and observed the turret for the sanctus bell, rising from the east gable of the nave; such a gazer would not now feel

disappointment as he stepped within the edifice. The ancient and noble font first arrested the attention which was itself used. There were no pews. The old benches which had long filled the nave had been cleaned and polished, and new ones of the same make occupied the position where a short time before the Thornberry pew had stood, scarlet lined and furnished with table and chairs. Encaustic tiles of good designs and workmanship paved the way to the chancel, the view into which was no longer obstructed by the enormous pulpit, once the pride of the parish. In place of the plain oak Communion-table there stood an altar of beautifully-cut stone, at the back of which there stood a high and exquisitely-formed gilded cross. On each side stood two magnificently-carved gilt wooden candlesticks; and the east window, which was original and very beautiful, had been carefully restored, and filled with fresh painted glass, the crucifixion of our blessed Lord, with the figures of his blessed Mother and St. John at the foot of the cross, and other holy designs.

This and the restoration of the chancel had been done by Mr. Eynon, as the most proper monument he could rear in memory of his brother. The velvet altar cloth Ella had herself embroidered, and her busy fingers were still industriously working on the cushions for the pulpit and fald stool, which had been substituted for the "reading desk." In fact, the whole interior wore so precisely the appearance of a beau-

tiful Catholic Church, as to justify Mr. Vernon's expression when he saw it,—“Alas! that it should be EMPTY.”

Thus had Ella's summer passed away—in attention to present duties—in fond memories of the absent—in tender solicitude towards her father—in acts of charity to all around her—and in much thought. Thornberry Abbey and Church supplied the readiest and most frequent food for her reflections. The restorations in the Church were most delightful to a mind eager to help on the cause which she hoped would, one day, when it had fair exercise, bring to her thirsting heart the full satisfying stream of life. Church restoration was not with her a task only. Lester had told her that, right and desirable as it was to have carved altars and embroidered cloths, that things were not to stop there. They were at last but accessories, and means by which people's minds might be enlarged and excited to inquire after those truths which were the real treasures of the Church. But how delightful to be employed in preparing the way for such happy times, when the Church should put on her beautiful garments, and be to the people generally what she was now only to the few. All things are eloquent in a Church, thought Ella, as she looked with hope and pleasure on the various improvements which had been made. Her visits there were very frequent, taking the measure for covers or cushions yet to be made,

or copying the designs on the old tiles; drawing the curious carved work on some old bench ends, or the monuments of various characters in which Thornberry Church was rich. The monuments were chiefly those of her own and the Monkton family. One only had been added by the family at Belle Vue. It had been erected a few years before the late Mr. Lester's death, and deserves description. Backed by a high piece of black marble, of a stunted pyramidal form, was, in alabaster, an urn standing on a pillar. On one side leant a female form, in an attitude of grief, on the other side drooped a weeping willow. Beneath the willow tree, on the ground, was a bust of a gentleman. Inscribed beneath was as follows:—

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
SIR ALEXANDER MARTIN, BART.,

WHO DEPARTED THIS LIFE, IN THE FULL
ASSURANCE OF HIS ACCEPTANCE ABOVE,

MAY 10TH, 18—

HE HAD SERVED HIS COUNTRY AS SHERIFF AND
ALSO AS DEPUTY LIEUTENANT: AND BEING
POSSESSED OF ALL THE SOCIAL AND CONJUGAL
VIRTUES, WAS RESPECTED ABROAD, AND BELOVED AT HOME.

On earth he knew his sins were all forgiven,
Now with the brightest saints he dwells in Heaven;
Imputed righteousness his garment there,
The robe Christ freely gives for all to wear.

This monument was erected
As a tribute of respect and affection
By his disconsolate Widow.

This was not the only poetical monument. There was one to an ancestor of Ella's, bearing the date of the latter part of the seventeenth century. It was a specimen of the degraded punning taste of that day. Ella always read it with a sigh. Yet the remains of a charitable man lay beneath :—

Stay, wanderer in this hallowed gloom,
Stay, and observe this faithful tomb,
Which holds in honourable trust
The treasure of a good man's dust.
Hast heard of one most good and great ?
Heavn's heir—with yet a good estate
In this poor world ? Hast heard of such
Now fall'n 'neath death's unfriendly clutch ?
AYE NONE, shall brighter shine in Heaven than he.
AYE NONE, a better path shall point to thee.

There was another to a fair ancestress of Ella's which interested her, and may well be mentioned here. It was of the date of William III, and was erected to a lady of Thornberry who died on the very day which had been fixed for her marriage with her cousin. On her death-bed she made her will, and bestowed in that manner on her intended husband the whole of the property she would have brought him as a wife. It was a high and very bulky altar tomb, built of stone and plastered. On it knelt two figures of a lady and gentleman as large as life, facing each other, with their dresses elaborately coloured. The lady has her left arm towards you, the

hand of which is rather ostentatiously displayed, to show the absence of the wedding-ring, in the other hand she holds a roll of parchments, representing the title deeds of the Thornberry estate, which she is presenting to her companion. Only the date appears below, but this legend was faithfully preserved.

The monuments of her own family were certainly interesting to Ella, but a deeper and holier interest attached to the memorials of Monkton's departed greatness. The monument of earliest date was theirs, and was of a time about coeval with the church itself. It was an altar tomb, on which lay the effigies of Sir Galfridus de Monkton and his lady. The knight was clad in plate armour, with his basinet on his head, which rested on his helmet, from which the crest towered high, and his good sword lay by his belted side. The wife lay in her tight surcoat and mantle, and the hands of each met together on their breasts, in the attitude of prayer and expectancy so constant in old monuments. Round the verge of the tomb on a brass band were inscribed these words :
**"Orate pro aiabbs Galfridi de Monkton
 et Habisie uxoris eius qbi qvidem Gal-
 fridus obiit prid : kal : Ivn : MCCCCXX
 et Habisia in festo pbrif : B : Marie
 Virg : MCCCCXI.**

On the side panels of the tomb coats of arms were carved, the Monkton shield in the centre bearing—azure, a cross fitchy, or, between three towers triple-

towered, each on a rock proper. Other monuments were there of later date, and then there was a cessation of them for a long period. When they appeared again it was in different sort, a simple black cross and the initials R. I. P. with the name of the departed, and the date of their death. Underneath would come some religious inscription, "Miserere mei, Deus," or "Orate pro anima."

All these things were full of interest to Ella. When Mr. Vernon had visited the church, she had asked him about the monuments, and had learnt, that, during the greater part of Elizabeth's reign, Monkton had been uninhabited, that various penalties incurred by members of the family for their father's sake had greatly impoverished them, so that their present state was one of great contrast to that when Richard de Monkton founded the abbey, which her family now possessed. Ella could not help feeling shocked; the fact of being the heiress of Thornberry, of calling that Abbey hers, which Mrs. Monkton's ancestor had bestowed on the Catholic church, disagreeably disturbed her delicate feelings.

Ella had long secretly cherished the desire to bestow the Abbey on the Established Church; but she had that day heard some things which affected her sense of propriety. The founder, Mrs. Monkton's ancestor, had been buried at the Abbey. It was his tomb which still stood where the nave had been. Mr. Vernon told her that it had never been removed.

Richard de Monkton lay there still. Could a new Church of England building be built over this grand old Catholic tomb with propriety? Something made Ella feel that Mrs. Monkton would prefer having the morning and evening dew still to fall on her kindred than that such a desire should be realised. So Ella was sad sometimes when she thought of her inheritance. Between her regard for Mrs. Monkton and her interest in the Catholic Church, her faithfulness to her own system, and her delicate sense of honour and propriety, she was often quite puzzled as to her future conduct; and then another thought would arise. The owners of Thornberry had never fully prospered. Her uncle's perpetual forebodings of evil had not been without cause. She was the only one of her generation, and was going to take the estate into another family, and perhaps all its sorrow also; she almost wished that Monkton had never come into their possession, and felt certain, that, should it ever be hers, she should have great difficulty in devising in what manner it should be disposed of. How comforting at such moments was the recollection of Herbert. It will all be in his hands, she would say; he always decides rightly. That thought dispelled all gloom, and Ella was again cheerful, hopeful, and happy.

Mr. Vernon unconsciously recalled her thoughts, which had been wandering in the above direction when in the church, by saying aloud "Ora pro nobis," in a tone of deep and solemn feeling.

He stood before the altar-tomb we have described.

"We pray for the dead," said Ella.

"Yes," replied Mr. Vernon, "I know the Court of Arches has decided that such practices are not contrary to the Church of England, but do you pray for Galfridus de Monkton?"

Ella smiled and said,

"The knight's bones are dust,
And his good sword rust,
His soul is with the Saints, I trust."

"Very well, Miss Eynon, then do you pray to him?"

"I cannot reply to such close questioning, Mr. Vernon, but generally I say '*I believe in the Communion of Saints*'."

"Which statement the Church of England thinks large enough to admit of two interpretations," replied Mr. Vernon.

"Unfortunately it may be so," said Ella, "but on the first subject there is no doubt; since the suit you have alluded to we certainly may pray for the dead."*

"The precedent of the Protestant bishop, Barrow," said Mr. Vernon, "had no doubt great weight with that trial. It was cited then. The inscription on his tomb-stone, which stands immediately outside the

* The suit *Breeks v. Woolfrey*, decided in the Arches Court, Dec. 12, 1838. The Rev. George Breeks, Vicar of the parish of Carisbrooke, against Mary Woolfrey, who had placed on her husband's tomb-stone, "Pray for the soul of Joseph Woolfrey," and "It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead," 2 Mac. xii. 46."

west door on the right-hand side of the cathedral of St. Asaph, ran thus : ‘ *Ovos transeuntes in domum Domini, domum orationis, orate pro conservo vestro, ut inveniat misericordiam in die Domini.* ’ ”

“ A very sufficient proof that the bishop did not think praying for the dead contrary to the doctrine and discipline of the church,” observed Ella.

“ Yes,” said Mr. Vernon, “ but may I not say, what you sometimes say, it was only the opinion of an individual. Another bishop who, some people would perhaps say, had clearer views of truth, had these questionable lines obliterated. The monument remains—I have seen it—and this inscription is effaced. I should say, that either the top stone which bore the inscription has been replaced by another, on which all but the objectionable part of the inscription has been cut, or that the original stone has been turned with the underside uppermost for that purpose.”

“ I am very sorry to hear this,” said Ella, “ but now I may say to you, it was only the act of an individual, and the decision of the Court of Arches pleases me best.”

“ Well, Miss Eynon,” said Mr. Vernon, as he took his leave, “ I would not change my obligations for your power of choice.”

“ And I would gladly accept the happy yoke of obedience if I might,” observed Ella.



CHAPTER VII.

THE BEGINNING OF TROUBLES.

It is now time to ask how Mrs. Hardy liked these church restorations.

Let her speak for herself ; but the reader must not suppose that such feelings as hers grew up in six months, or that carved stone, and polished oak and fair pavements were the exciting causes. Mrs. Hardy had never forgotten the drive from Seacombe, she had never forgiven Mr. Lester, and she could not love his son. She thought that Mr. Lester had been the means of disappointment and mortification. She had not succeeded in being the consulting friend on all occasions at Seacombe, as she had designed, and she attributed it to his means. She had made presents of books to her little godchild, and she had felt sure that they had never been given to her. Her visits at Seacombe had not won her a place in the affections of the young heiress—for who is more discriminating than a child ? Mrs. Hardy was of an ambitious, as well as a suspicious nature. Her ambition, foiled as to Thornberry, was soothed by success at

Belle Vue, and Lester's church restorations gave so large a scope for the exercise of her natural tendency to suspicion and evil thinking, that any new circumstance, however small, would be sufficient to produce energetic action — and such a circumstance soon occurred.

Mrs. Hardy now had something on her mind.

She had in vain endeavoured to reason with herself on the course to be pursued ; she could attain to no fixed determination, so she took herself and her grievances to Belle Vue. Do not let Catholics imagine that they, and those who are similarly minded, alone practise confession. It is done to an extraordinary extent in the antagonist school, with one remarkable distinguishing difference, whereas the Catholic party confess sins and failings, the others are more communicative, and entertain their Directors with their perfections. Mrs. Hardy's mind was burthened with the abundance of her "charity," and her "love of souls." So great were these in their relations to Ella and her Father, that they might have been mistaken for envy, hatred, and malice, towards Mr. Lester and the Catholics. Arrived at Belle Vue, she asked for Mr. Barrington Martin, she wished to see him alone, and soon her wishes were gratified, and she was ushered into that sacred place, his study. It was a room well furnished with the comforts and luxuries of life, and the tempered light which came through the

- drapery of the window shed around an air of quiet and repose, which appeared most consistent with the habits of a studious man. Mr. Barrington Martin, reclining in a crimson leather easy chair, was reading a small book, which bore its name in gilt letters on the back "Gems of Luther." On the table lay "Scott's Bible"—in his book-case was "Matthew Henry's Bible." He was fond of saying, with one hand on Scott and the other extended towards Matthew Henry, "This I read, that I refer to. If I had but one book in the world, it should be Scott's Bible." Yet no man was more the advocate of private judgment than Mr. Barrington Martin, no man was more sure that he had sought for himself—seen for himself, and, having made scripture explain scripture, judged for himself. He had formed his opinions on those of Scott, he often expressed them in the words of Matthew Henry; but who could be more loud than Mr. Barrington Martin, in inveighing against those who adopted the opinion of the Church, and spoke the words of the Saints and Confessors?

The gentleman, with a studied air of affectionate politeness, advanced to meet Mrs. Hardy. He held her hand till she was seated, and then, in accents soft and low and mysterious, enquired how he could assist so dear, so precious a member of his flock. The tale we can tell in shorter phrases, and in a straighter way, than Mrs. Hardy. She had heard in

one of those marvellous ways which are never satisfactorily accounted for, that Lester had had conversations with the Catholic priest ; she had thought it her duty to remonstrate with him, so called at the Parsonage with her guinea for the Blanket Charity, instead of sending it as she had done ever since the quarrel with his father. The servant told her he was from home, upon which she desired to be shewn into his study where she could write him a note ; a book on that study table had attracted her attention, she had opened it—“ *Mr. Martin would hardly believe her—but it certainly was a Popish Mass Book.*” There fell from its leaves a piece of paper ; on picking it up she could not help seeing it was poetry, of course there was no harm in reading poetry, and she had read it—“ *It was positive Popery, addressed to the Virgin Mary.*” But her horror was increased when she saw Lester’s name attached to it, and this led her to examine the Mass Book, and Lester’s name was there also : now what was to be done ? Mr. Martin, as was his usual way in all cases of perplexity, proposed applying to his mother and wife, so the meeting was adjourned to the ladies’ boudoir.

The story was again told, and the account of concealed Popery revived with every imaginable expression of horror. Mrs. Barrington Martin earnestly hoped that all such votaries of the Blessed Virgin

would become Romanists in earnest, and "the sooner the better:" for it is a remarkable fact, that although the Catholic faith was held to be the very "abomination of desolation," and the "loser of souls," yet into this abyss of ungodliness, as they believed it to be, they very readily consigned those in the English Church who differed from them, and in their zeal declared that the sooner they were thus for ever lost the better. But such words and such wishes were not enough for Mrs Hardy, she wanted action—she asked what was to be done? She had for a long time looked in sorrow at the new customs introduced by Mr. Lester into Thornberry. His father was bad enough, but he had inherited all his father's mistaken notions, and added to them all the new vagaries of the unfaithful days they lived in. Then he had gained so great an influence with Mr. Eynon, poor doting old gentleman, and with his daughter because he was Herbert Stafford's friend, that they upheld him and encouraged all his follies. The font had been moved from the middle aisle and put by the south porch. The children were no longer allowed to sit round the altar rails, but sat and knelt on benches facing the east, and the teaching in the school, judging from some books she had seen, was quite objectionable. Mr. Lester, though he opened his church on all the Saints' days at eleven in the morning, and daily at seven, had refused to open his church

on the fifth of November as a festival, or allow any one to preach in it on that day. Indeed he was very extraordinary about preaching, as they all knew, for of course no one had forgotten his refusing to allow Mr. Millar to preach in his pulpit. "Pulpit, indeed;" continued Mrs. Hardy, "if that thing he has can be called a pulpit! He has positively destroyed the former one. I heard that it had been burnt, and he has a thing no higher than a reading-desk. He reads all the prayers looking at the altar, and I am told that his superstition is so great about the communion plate, that he allows no one to touch it but himself. Really, I believe he cleans it always himself. It is too dreadful; I really wish we could devise something to stop the current of Popery before it becomes too strong for us. His dress is quite different from that of other clergy. He never wears a gown, but only a surplice, even to preach in, and the surplice is made after some old pattern. I asked him about this myself once, and he told me, quite with a smile, that he was not obliged to provide his own vestments, and that the parish had not given him anything else. I felt quite annoyed, but young men are now all too proud to reason about things." The sum of Mr. Lester's misdoings having been gone through, there was a general lamentation over the degeneracy of the times; and, after a consultation of some length, it was agreed that Mrs. Hardy should do what she had long desired,

namely, hold a "Sabbath evening prayer meeting"—nothing public, of course, to attract attention; but her own servants and their friends might come at first, and she might read them a chapter and a tract suited to the miserable doings of their clergyman, and after a little while, "if the truth appeared to prevail," a petition might be drawn up, praying Mr. Lester to cease from introducing innovations into the church service.

Mrs. Hardy commenced her "Sabbath doings," and sometimes Mr. Barrington Martin stepped in, when he was "engaged in prayer." Lester heard of it, and also of the free use which had been sometimes made there of his name. He called on Mrs. Hardy, and represented to her very strongly the evil tendency of her conduct. He was met with reproaches, and assurances that many of his people would not submit any longer to his practices. Prophecies of a deserted church, and threats of a petition to the bishop if he did not attend to the wishes of the congregation, quite astonished Mr. Lester. He at last was obliged to remind Mrs. Hardy that she was speaking to her parish pastor, to whom she owed respect; but he was instantly reminded in return, that he was the servant of the people, and should recollect what was due to them. Thus abashed, astonished, and distressed, Mr. Lester took his leave.

He soon found that disaffection had spread further

than he had imagined. By dint of agitation of various kinds, this small party of "Evangelicals" had attained to considerable influence, chiefly, it is true, by assuming a loud and disorderly tone, so as to terrify the lovers of peace and propriety. Curiously, too, they assumed to themselves the title of *The real Friends of the Church*, and said they were in arms for the mother who had reared them, and the altar where they had worshipped, and so roused each other's sympathies, till some, *perhaps*, really believed what they said. Such, however, was the effect of these things, that Mr. Lester found his long tried friends, the often re-elected churchwardens, quite alarmed at the position of affairs, especially as those who chose to leave Thornberry church were welcomed even with congratulations by Mr. Barrington Martin.

In this state of things, Lester applied for consolation to Mr. Eynon. His experience in parochial affairs had been long and practical; and his judgment and high principles were respected by all parties.

But Lester got little consolation, for Mr. Eynon looked on things with a very melancholy eye. He did not, because he could not, mix much with the world, but he had lived long enough in it to know the materials of which it was made, and had studied sufficiently to feel that the world was always the same. He also knew, and he confessed it to Lester, that the

bishops and other authorities of the English church, had not *in reality* the power given them by courtesy. Although the shadow was enough in the time of peace, the substance was found wanting when disturbances arose. So incomplete was the church government system, and so trammelled by powers and laws which were without, that she *could not* be the protecting power which her conscientious servants required. "Therefore, my friend," said Mr. Eynon, "yield for peace all you *can* yield without disgrace. If the mob arise, the mob depend on it will rule. It is folly to undertake a war without the proper defences. Wait till the proper power of the Church is hers again, then you will have armour and weapons, and I will not discourage you from standing foremost in the fight."

But Lester was, naturally enough, not satisfied, but entered into correspondence with his bishop.



CHAP. VIII.

MORNING CALLS.

Morning calls were one of the petty trials of Ella's happy life ; she found no real companionship any where but in her own house and at the Parsonage ; yet morning calls, as matters of courtesy, were Christian duties, and must be encountered. Mrs. Hardy was borne with for the sake of her mother, who, in the recollection of some services rendered during a sudden illness at Thornberry, had not chosen to refuse that lady's offer to be godmother to her child.

But Mrs. Hardy had of late become so bold an antagonist of all Ella deemed sacred, that she could scarcely listen to her with patience. But her Church principles assisted her : she tried to see, in her trying companion, not the dogmatizing lady, but the uninstructed member of the Church ; a sweet charity arose to plead her cause, and her manner lost none of her usual gentleness. A day of duty arrived, and Ella was received with many protestations of regard by Mrs. Hardy. The weather, railroads, and even poli-

tics and dress were discussed by the guest in rapid succession, under the terrible fear of Mrs. Hardy's introducing the, to her, never failing topic of the Church. But all Ella's ingenuity and volubility were of no avail; Mrs. Hardy summoned courage for the emergency, and declared she had no interest in "worldly" topics. "In these times, dear Miss Eynon, our hearts are occupied with but one subject, and out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh; you, who *profess* to be religious," and Mrs. Hardy laid a more than necessary emphasis on the word *profess*,—"you can have no objection to talk on the great subject, which, indeed, we are all of us bound to consider. I brought it before my little party on sabbath night last, and very fortunately,—providentially I might say—Mr. Barrington Martin stepped in, and gave such a sweet discourse; indeed, Miss Eynon, I wish you would come some sabbath and read a chapter with us, it would have a very good effect on the poor people I think."

Mrs. Hardy paused—she had made a bold stroke, and feared for the issue. Ella felt, indeed, indignant, and boldly and candidly explained to Mrs. Hardy, that such doings were in her view entirely contradictory of the spirit of Church discipline, on which Mrs. Hardy called her a formalist, warned her against being priest-ridden, and said her evening lectures were more edifying than Mr. Lester's Church prayers, es-

pecially as he made the book of common prayer an authority for so many unwarrantable innovations. If the prayer book was to be turned into a sanction for Popery, Mrs. Hardy thought that the less they had to do with it the better. Ella left Mrs. Hardy and called at Belle Vue. Folly she knew she should meet there, but not coarseness. Mrs. Martin now and then allowed her zeal to overcome her good breeding, but Lady Martin never forgot that soft words and gentle manners were expected of an elegant and pretty woman. It must, however, be confessed, that, with the sweetest smile and in the tenderest accents, she sometimes said the most disagreeable things imaginable ; but then they were not said openly, but thrown out as suggestions or uttered in the form of inuendo, so that the distressed and often mortified hearer had always the refuge of pretending not to understand. Such self discipline was Ella's common resource, and as much so as usual on the present occasion.

“ How welcome you are, dear Miss Eynon,” said her ladyship, “ my sweet friend—you look charmingly—it is delightful to see you ; I will send for my children ; pray sit down and stay a long time with me, you come so very seldom.” Then enquiries were made for Mr. Eynon. “ What an object of interest he must be to you—painfully interesting I should fear—a *little* too much in the old school style, I

think, to satisfy me. Perhaps *you* do not mind, or you may not think him in any danger—of course not—he has been so long an invalid. The most anxious feelings must wear off in time, but there *are* feelings, dear Miss Eynon, excuse me, but I feel so much on these subjects—*there are* feelings which must be excited, and it is a painful task—but look, here is Mrs. Martin.” Mrs. Martin advanced leading her youngest child—the prodigy—Ella turned to the child, thankful to be relieved from the grandmother. She told the child of a shady lane, where the prettiest wild flowers grew. “She is very fond of botany,” said Lady Martin. “My love, fetch the new book Mamma has just written for you. She is taught every thing on scriptural principles, united with scripture. She will learn the Bible and botany at the same time.” The new book was produced; pieces of moss were gummed on the leaves, the botanical name above, and a text of Holy Scripture below. “Some of them are really quite curious. Mrs. Martin has adapted them so well—here is a very nice one, the smallest of all the mosses, and the text is, ‘*despise not the day of small things.*’” Ella really knew not what to say, but Mrs. Martin obviated the necessity of her speaking on that topic by saying, “What a terrible excitement Mr. Lester is making in his parish: I feel so very sorry for those poor people—really, Miss Eynon, you and your father, who

are so influential there, might surely persuade him that there is no religion in surplices and all that sort of thing."

"Mr. Lester," said Ella, "does not teach a religion of surplices, though he chooses to uphold the rubric of the church in that and other things."

"But when he finds such mere externals are a snare to his people, surely, as they are trifles, he might yield them up with edification."

"Mr. Lester does not think that either he, or any other clergyman, has a discretionary power on such points, and if they are trifles, surely it is the part of the people to yield rather than the priest."

"No discretionary power!" exclaimed Mrs. Martin, "why does not Mr. Lester dress his head in a velvet night cap then, for that I believe is ordered somewhere; but we shall have that also by and by, I suppose, if he can succeed in making people submit to all his other novelties."

Ella thought it time to order the carriage and depart. She did not like to argue, and she felt annoyed about the velvet night cap. Farewells were cordially spoken, and Lady Martin begged her to attend the consecration of their church, and dine with them on that day—would Mr. Eynon be able to come? At all events she hoped for Miss Worth. Ella never accepted invitations without telling her father, and promised to write her answer. She then desired

to be driven to Monkton, and soon arrived at the gate of the old mansion.

She was admitted to see Mrs. Monkton—a thing she always enjoyed. After a little general conversation the old lady rang the bell and desired Mr. Vernon to be told that Miss Eynon was there. Ella had not seen Mr. Vernon for some time; but she knew he had called at Thornberry and spent half an hour with her father. Mr. Vernon soon appeared, and asked about the drawing of the Abbey and the progress of the Church restoration.

“The painting is finished,” said Ella, “and adorns, if I may say so, my father’s sitting-room.” Turning to Mrs. Monkton, she said in explanation—“Mr Vernon and Mr. Lester were by when I began it; it is a view of the Abbey.”

“I know, my dear,” replied the old lady. “Mr. Vernon knows I seldom go out, so he brings me agreeable pieces of news sometimes, and he told me of your drawing, and his talk with Mr. Lester; and also of his visit to Thornberry Church.”

There was a pause. “I have been calling at Belle Vue,” said Ella, “and have been asked to be there at the consecration of their Church next week. Shall you go, Mr. Vernon?”

He smiled. “No, Miss Eynon; I cannot have any interest there, you know.”

“I beg your pardon; you were interested in Thorn-

berry Church, and I thought Belle Vue might have been an object of some interest also."

"Not the smallest," replied Mr. Vernon. "Thornberry and Belle Vue are two very different places. Every Catholic would be interested in Thornberry."

"The Monkton monuments are interesting to you, and the fact of its having been built by the Monks at the Abbey would also have a claim on your regard."

"Yes, certainly. Such circumstances bring forth strong and healthy sympathies. The good Monks toiled there. How many of the high and noble of the land assisted at the pious work. Cannot you fancy the busy scene, Miss Eynon? True greatness came forth then; and many with noble blood beneath the Monk's habit would act as 'bricklayer's boy,' perhaps, to the more practised mechanic. Those were busy, and happy, and holy times. Yes, holy, when each did what he could in God's service; when he that was greatest among them was the minister, and he that was first the servant, according to the command and the example of our Blessed Lord. Holy and happy days—most happy. We cannot say as of the first temple—

'Like a tall palm the noiseless fabric grew.'

But we may say that the Church rose amid prayers which the saints heard and joined in, and hymns to which the angels of heaven listened with thanks-

giving. And then, as time passed on, the holy dead were laid there. Not as they are now placed there when necessity takes us to the Protestant parish Church, but with all the solemn circumstance of our Holy Church, such as Thornberry saw when mass for the living and the dead was daily said at her altars. Such things make a great difference between Thornberry and Belle Vue, but not the *real* difference."

"What is the real difference, dear Sir," asked Ella?

"That the one is a Church, and that the other is—is—really, Miss Eynon, I scarcely know what it is—only *it is not* a Church."

"Indeed, Mr. Vernon, I don't know what you mean."

Here Mrs. Monkton spoke. "Thornberry Church," she said, "besides those associations which have been so feelingly spoken of, and into which no one can enter better than myself, was dedicated by Catholics to the service of God in his one true Church, and received Catholic consecration. Though alienated from that service, it is in the sight of God still a Catholic Church, and no wrong usage to which the building has been put, no tyrannical power which has robbed us of our own, can make it in itself anything but what our forefathers made it. This the Church at Belle Vue can never be. Built by Protestants, intended for the service of the Protestant religion, Catholics have no feelings of sympathy connected with it. It is

not in our eyes a Church—neither can it ever be made a Church by anything that Protestants can do.”

“Am I to understand, dear Madam,” asked Ella, “that a new Anglican Church, if it could be given to the Catholic Church, would have to be consecrated just as if it had never been used for religious purposes?”

“Exactly so; all that would have to be done to any purchased place of Dissenting worship, would have to be done to a new Anglican Church. It would have to be consecrated.”

“But suppose an old Church, such as Thornberry, could be given to the Catholics.”

“In that case,” said Mrs. Monkton, “no consecration would be necessary, because it had formerly received consecration. The Church would have only to be reconciled, unless the outer walls had ever been taken down.”

“Mr. Vernon,” said Ella, “what do you think of English consecration?”

He replied—“I think it no consecration at all.”

Ella looked in Mr. Vernon’s face; it was so full of kindness, she could not help saying—“I am quite disappointed to find you so great an enemy.”

He replied—“I am full of sympathy for you; but I have no sympathy in an unmeaning ceremony which is called ‘Consecration,’ and consecrates nothing.”

“Explain yourself, dear Sir,” said Mrs. Monkton. “I am sure Miss Eynon will like to hear.”

Thus invited, and encouraged by Ella's looks of smiling inquiry, Mr. Vernon said—"The consecration services used by the English Bishops are, to Catholic minds, no consecrations at all. I mean, Miss Eynon, that your Bishops pronounce the sentence of consecration, and I believe sign it, and lay it on the Communion table: the previous Prayers and Psalms never having conveyed the idea of consecration in the most remote degree, I can only again call it unmeaning. But this need not make you unhappy, Miss Eynon, for High Church views are very consolatory here as elsewhere. The English Church has no authorised consecration service. Each Bishop follows his own judgment, so, as no service is authorised, you are at liberty to criticise—to like or dislike—as much as you please."

"Don't laugh at us, Mr. Vernon," said Ella somewhat reproachfully.

"Indeed, Miss Eynon, I did not mean to laugh. I *really am* glad that you are not obliged to defend what I think so meanly of. I am glad that the 1712 Convocation did not fix the service now usually used, with occasional variations, on you to defend and submit to with the high-wrought obedience which your friends teach."

"I wish Bishop Andrewes's could be authorized," said Ella.

"Bishop Andrewes's was as good as could have been expected under the circumstances. It was formed

from the Catholic model, though terribly garbled, but there is a good air of consistency through the whole of it. However, in his there was no unction ; it could not be called a consecration service. But now, Miss Eynon, let me reward you for listening so patiently by reading to you an account of a true consecration. Here is the account of Hugh de S. Victore." And Ella having given leave, Mr. Vernon read as follows :—

“ Now with what earnestness and love Christ adorns and prepares for himself his Spouse for her heavenly dedication, is in part signified by the temporal dedication of a Church. For the Bishop thrice walks round the Church to be dedicated, sprinkling it with blessed water ; the clergy and the people following him. Meanwhile, outside and within the Church, twelve lights are burning. As often as they arrive at the door—which is closed by way of mysterious signification, the Bishop with his Pastoral Staff strikes the lintel, saying, ‘ Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in.’ A Deacon answers, ‘ Who is this King of Glory ? ’ To whom the Bishop replies, ‘ the Lord of Hosts, he is the King of Glory.’ At the third time, the door-way being thrown open, he enters with the clergy and people, saying ‘ Peace to this house.’ Then he goes through the other things which belong to dedication. But all those

things which are here visibly transacted, God accomplishes by invisible virtue in the soul, which is the true Temple of God ; in which Faith makes the foundation, Hope rears the building, Charity consummates it. The Catholic Church, also, herself being one framed together with many stones, is the Temple of God ; because many temples are one temple, of whom there is one God and one Faith."

" So, then, the house to be dedicated is a soul to be sanctified ; the water is penitence, the salt is wisdom, the threefold aspersion is the thrice immersion in baptizing ; the twelve lights are so many Apostles preaching the mystery of the Cross ; the Bishop is Christ ; the Staff is his power ; the three-fold knocking at the door is his domination over things in Heaven, and things in earth and things under the earth ; the opening of the doorway is the removing of sin. The Bishop entering prays for the peace of our Lord ; and Christ entering the world makes peace between God and men. Then prostrating himself he prays our Lord for sanctification ; and Christ being humiliated at the Passion, prayed for the disciples and those who should believe, saying, *Father, sanctify them in Truth*. Rising he makes no salutation, but only prays because no applause is to be given to those who have not yet been sanctified ; but prayer must be made for them. The writing down of the alphabet in the Pavement is the simple teaching of the Faith in the heart of man."

Here Mr. Vernon explained to Ella that the Greek and Latin alphabet was written in ashes on the pavement in the form of a Cross.

The alphabet written from the left angle of the east to the right angle of the west, and the other from the right angle of the east to the left angle of the west, express the Cross, and figure the collecting into one of each people, according to that which Jacob did, when he blessed the sons of Joseph with his hands crossed in each other. For although passing from the east, nevertheless Christ left the Jews on his left hand, and came to the Gentiles ; to whom, although they had been in the west, he gives to be on his right-hand. And at length passing over from the Gentiles placed on the right of the east, he will visit the Jews in the left angle of the west ; of whom it is certain that they are worse than he had before found the Gentiles to be.

The staff with which this writing is executed mysteriously signifies the ministry of the Doctors of the Church, by which the conversion of the Gentiles was effected and the conversion of the Jews remains to be effected. Next the Bishop standing before the altar, and invoking God to his help, signifies those who, having received the Faith, prepare themselves to battle. And because they are yet in the contest, as it were, amid sighings, Alleluia is not yet sung. After this, water is blessed with salt and ashes ; wine also,

mixed with water, being added to it. The water is the people ; the salt is teaching ; the ashes, the memory of the Passion of Christ ; the wine mixed with water is God and man united—the wine the divinity, the water the humanity. Thus the people is sanctified by the teaching of the faith, and by the memory of the Passion is joined to its head, God and man. Whence the Altar and the Church within are sprinkled ; that within as without it may be shewn to be sanctified as a spiritual Church. The sprinkling of hyssop is humbleness, with which (humbleness) the Catholic Church is sprinkled and cleansed. He walks round, in the act of sprinkling, as it were making a survey, and giving his attention to all things. Meanwhile is chaunted, ‘ *Let God arise and let his enemies be scattered, &c.*’ and its respond, with an antiphon ; which is followed by another, “ *Whoso dwelleth under the shadow of the Most High, &c.*, and the Bishop chaunts, ‘ *My house shall be called a house of prayer ;*’ and again, ‘ *I will declare thy name to my brethren.*’ And because without God nothing avails, in conclusion he prays, that those who enter there to beg for benefits may be heard.

These things being done he comes to the altar, chaunting “ *Introibo ad Altare Dei,*” with the whole Psalm, &c. And what remained of the water he pours out at the base of the altar ; committing to God what exceeds human strength in so great a mystery. Next the altar is cleansed with

linen. The altar is Christ; the linen is his flesh, brought to whiteness, and the glory of immortality, by the beatings of the passion. Then the Bishop offers, upon the altar, incense, lighted in the middle of the altar, in the shape of a cross. Then these crosses are marked with the oil on the eastern wall of the Church; and the consecration having been thus completed, the altar is covered with a white veil. The incense, prayers, and oil, mark the grace of the Holy Ghost, whose plenitude (as the ointment that ran down unto the beard, even unto Aaron's beard) descended upon the Apostles, and their disciples, who preached the mystery of the cross through four climes of the world, God co-operating with them. The white veil mystically signifies the joyousness of immortality.

Mr. Vernon shut his book, and Ella expressed her admiration, and thanked him. "I hope," she said, "to see the day when the consecration service of my Church will be made to resemble more closely what you have read, or, rather, when the English Church may use that very ritual, and call it her own. But you, Mr. Vernon, you do not like looking forward to the union of the two Churches, as I do."

"I cannot look forward to what is impossible," said Mr. Vernon.

"Oh! Is it impossible? You do not know how much true Church Principles are gaining ground among us. You do not know how anxiously many

are praying and hoping for unity—you do not know—”

“Forgive me for interrupting you,” said Mr. Vernon, “I *do* know all you say, and I believe all that you *would wish* to say. I see, and I lament over, the party of which you are one, because you are labouring for that which is not bread. You are wearing yourselves out for a phantom, for a thing which only exists in your own earnest minds and ardent imaginations.”

But, now, Ella interrupted him in her turn:—
“Mr. Vernon,” she said, with some dignity, “I cannot hear my Spiritual Mother spoken of in that manner. The Church which, within herself, has shewn such purifying principles as she has of late, I must not hear called a phantom. Let her works judge her; could a dead tree produce such fruits? Hampered and chained she is, by a variety of things, but she is not to be deserted on that account. The Church which produced and reared Andrewes and Laud, and Ferrar, and a host of others of their mind, and such characters as are now adorning her, is, surely, sufficient to nourish me.”

“Yes, Miss Eynon,” replied Mr. Vernon with energy, “and how does she reward such. To try to work her system in the only way in which a Church system is to be worked, is to perish in the attempt. She has been the ruin of all who have undertaken her cause, and has brought the heads of her patrons

to the block. Neither is she changed. How are your own party treated: you are openly and everywhere charged with arrogance, in assuming to yourselves the position of members of the Anglican Church. Your interpretation of the articles is called unfair and dishonest, and although the moral conduct of your party is such as your Church has not seen in any body of men within her, since her existence, *not even this can gain you credit, or even patient treatment.* See how things are going on in your own parish at this moment. See the disgraceful, resentful opposition working up against Mr. Lester, and mark their language; they have borrowed your own—‘True friends of the Church.’—‘Anxious for the interest of their Spiritual Mother.’ They represent themselves as Churchmen, and the Sons of Churchmen, and anxious to hand down the Churchman’s privileges to their children—‘But they will have the popular meaning put on the articles, and not your meaning.’ And they will not hold out the hand of fellowship to any members of that Church which they call ‘the Apostacy, and the Lady of Babylon,’ and which you call ‘an elder, though an erring sister.’”

“Mr. Lester has appealed to the Bishop,” said Ella.

“He has appealed to one who cannot help him,” replied Mr. Vernon.

And as Ella now rose, saying her father would expect her at home, he begged her to forgive him, if, in the earnestness of the moment, he had said anything to distress her.

“I am so much interested in your friends,” he added, “that I can ill restrain the energy of my feelings. You are so Catholic in doctrine, and yet so strongly chained to what I regard, at once, with pity and horror.”

“Good bye, my dear,” said Mrs. Monkton, laying down her work, and taking off her spectacles, “you interest us exceedingly. If you hold the doctrines of the true Church, you have little more to do than to treat the matter as a simple historical question. You have only to look to the origin of your Church, and the way in which it has been continued. Indeed, it is a simple historical question.” But Ella replied not. She made her adieu, and returned to Thornberry.



CHAP. IX.

TROUBLES AND TRUTH.

THE day of the consecration of the "New Church" had arrived. The Bishop of the diocese had been welcomed in great splendour, and the presence of Sir Alexander himself gave greater éclat to the proceedings. As her father had allowed her to follow her own inclinations in the matter, Ella had chosen to stay at home. But Mr. Eynon had overcome his love of home and quiet, and, taking Mr. Lester along with him, had gone to the consecration. In this step he was actuated by many motives. He felt that at such a time all the neighbouring Clergy should be present, and he went in his ministerial capacity. He also wished to pay his respects to the Diocesan, and, lastly, he wished to take Lester with him, and afford him all the advantage of a public testimony in his favour from one of his years and position. Lester felt this kindness, and, though undaunted and firm in his good principles and conscious rectitude, he felt happy to be seen among so many bent on his degradation, supporting Mr.

Eynon's tottering steps, and treated by him with unconcealed respect and affection. The circumstance certainly carried weight with it. The Bishop, who, on every account, desired to treat Mr. Eynon with respect, distinguished Lester with such peculiar kindness of manner as not a little daunted the opposition party. The consecration being completed—and, perhaps, Lester, in his heart, felt something of its want of meaning, and regretted that a large body of Clergy should meet in a Church without the celebration of “Holy Communion”—a large party returned to the house to pay their compliments to his Lordship, and partake of the refreshment which was served with great magnificence. Lester and Mr. Eynon knew what was coming. At a convenient moment, the Bishop's presence was requested through his secretary and chaplain, and a petition from the Parish of Thornberry was presented to him. The petition set forth the many grievances sustained by the true and devoted friends of the Church, in consequence of the introduction of certain obsolete customs and dangerous novelties, all of which were enumerated, during divine service, by Mr. Lester. The Bishop promised attention to the petition, and having expressed his sincere regret to Mr. Lester that the spirit of unity had been disturbed, all passed off for the present, and Mr. Eynon, considerably relieved that no scene had taken place,

and having expressed his high opinion of Lester's character to the Bishop, returned with his friend to Thornberry.

Miss Worth and Ella were inquisitive about the consecration, and all that had occurred was related to them. When the subject of the Bishop and Lester was spoken of, Ella felt breathless with interest. Her own words at Monkton, "Mr. Lester has appealed to the Bishop," and Mr. Vernon's reply, "He has appealed to one who cannot help him," rung in her ears. She felt restless to know the result; and the next day it was known. The Bishop's secretary forwarded to Mr. Lester a copy of his Lordship's reply to the Thornberry petitioners, accompanied by a very courteous note to himself. The note expressed his deep sorrow at the excited state of the parish, and the consequent existence of bad feelings; and went on to say, that, as Mr. Lester would see, the affair was not one which any Bishop could rule: but he would recommend, that everything which Mr. Lester could do, agreeably to his feelings of propriety, should be done for the restoration of peace. The answer to the petition was more particular. It was to the effect, that the removal of the font could not be noticed; that, however injudicious it had been to move it, yet, that being moved, as it was now in the right place, it must not be put back again. That the wearing of the surplice could not be forbidden.

The laws of the church no where provided that the Clergyman should wear a gown. That the reading of the offertory prayer was certainly directed after the sermon, that the making a collection was optional on the part of the Clergyman, but that the giving the alms was also optional on the part of the congregation. Nevertheless the Bishop felt it right to press *on both parties* the necessity of a peaceable adjustment of their disputes. The other subjects of complaint were also touched on by his Lordship, but not in a manner to satisfy the people, or to protect Lester from future annoyance.

Lester brought his papers to Thornberry, to show them to Mr. Eynon, and ask counsel and sympathy. "What am I to concede?" he asked. "The surplice I have worn ever since I was ordained—now seven years since. The font cannot be moved again. The offertory prayer was used by my Father. The collection is a novelty of mine, I allow. But the benefit the people have derived from it might be my excuse, and the cross at the altar is new. I might deprive the poor of the weekly collection, and I might take down the cross, but I shall not like to discontinue old customs under the false cry of "Novelty."

Ella was really indignant. "Do nothing, Mr. Lester," she exclaimed; "don't give those wicked people a triumph;" and Mr. Eynon thought the same. "Indeed," he said, "I do not see that you

can do anything, at least at present. You can see some of them, and try the effect of mild words. I am not without hope that steady conduct on your part, mingled with kindness, may have its effect. At any rate, try what you can do."

And Lester did try. He printed the account of the disposal of the offertory money, and when the poor were in possession of their warm blankets and other comforts, he appealed powerfully to the hearts of the discontented, and hoped for the best. It might have had a good effect, but minds were again excited by an account of the whole thing appearing in a provincial paper, where it was accompanied by very severe censures of Mr. Lester, hints of his tendency towards "Romanism," and hopes that the Churchwardens would assist the people in keeping far from them whatever wore even the appearance of a return to the errors of Popery. Such exciting language did its work. Easter came, and new Churchwardens were to be chosen. The parish had elected, contrary to the canon, both of them for many years, and always to the perfect satisfaction of both Lester and his father. Now Lester would gladly have chosen one himself, as the canon enjoins, but the law not bearing out the canon, after a fierce struggle the two most objectionable men in the parish were elected to the office. Mrs. Hardy felt it to be an open triumph. Even Lady Martin had expressed her interest, for one of the new

dignitaries was a person she had long patronized, one she had herself reformed, and it was known that the countenance given at Belle Vue to the malcontents had both increased their number and animosity. The next Sunday, on ascending the pulpit in his surplice, the new churchwardens, as they had previously agreed, put on their hats and left the Church. The Sunday after, they and a large party attended the new Church at Belle Vue, and then the uproar grew to its height, scene succeeded to scene, and vexation to vexation, the bishop was again appealed to, and, without tracing the disagreeable details, suffice it to say, that at the Bishop's request, Mr. Lester made all the desired concessions. A memorable Sunday came. No cross appeared over the communion table. Mr. Lester preached in his Master of Arts gown. There was no prayer after the sermon, and no collection for the poor. Ella could scarcely restrain her tears. Miss Worth's face of gentle meekness wore an expression of deep sorrow, and the mild gravity of Mr. Eynon's countenance gave place to an air of severity.

Mr. Lester had begun a course of sermons on Church feelings and Church discipline, but they were among the subjects of offence ; they were given up, and on this day of triumph,—this day, when the good were dejected and the poor forgotten,—some subject was chosen, not so open to the objections of the opposition party.

In a day or two after, Lester, as might be expected, sought the society of his friends. Ella was writing—writing to Herbert,—“I will not disturb you,” he said. “I will go to Mr. Eynon’s study, for I want to talk to him.”

“But I cannot let you go immediately. I must ask you to send a message to Herbert. I have been obliged to give him the disagreeable details of our defeat. He constantly bids me tell him how Church things progress among us ; and Herbert seems so happy, so much delighted with Rome ; he has seen the Pope, and is charmed with his dignity and venerable appearance, and will soon be introduced to him, and something makes us very happy, Mr. Lester—Herbert intends to shorten the term of his absence. There is such an excellent account of his health in this last letter ; he writes so delightfully, that, notwithstanding all our other troubles, we are quite in spirits this morning ; you will find my father hoping for the best with more earnestness than he hopes in general. Come and talk to me if you please before you go. I have a great deal to say to you when my writing is finished,” and Mr. Lester left her to seek her father.

Hardly had Ella finished sealing the letter to Herbert when Mr. Vernon was announced. He asked after Mr. Eynon, of whom Ella gave a good account. “But,” she said, “I will not tell him you are here till he has finished his conference with Mr. Lester, if

you have no objection to giving me a little of your time at first."

Mr. Vernon very gladly remained with Ella. He did not speak of the disturbances in the parish, but, as they were uppermost in Ella's mind, she soon introduced the subject ; and both grew deeply interested.

"It is useless, dear Miss Eynon," said Mr. Vernon, in answer to something she had said,—“it is useless to go over the old ground again and again. You insist on your right of interpreting the articles your own way, that is, in a way which permits of your accepting the doctrines defined in the Council of Trent : but I am struck with the manifest inconsistency which may be attributed to you, on account of the believers in the doctrines defined at that Council being unable to accept your articles. Could you blame us for having consciences as flexible as your own, and by signing your articles getting our education at Oxford, and taking our degrees at Cambridge ? Of course I, as a Catholic, enquire how your bishops stand affected towards you, and I find that they are, each one of them, more or less against you. You repeat the assurance that your opinions are the true opinions of your Church. Yet I see you opposed on all sides, and that spirit of insubordination which has ever been an ingredient in your establishment, ready to burst out against you with all the violence and intolerance which belongs to

it. Neither is this spirit confined to the illiterate or profane, your own clergy are many of them on the same side, and some of the bishops are unquestionably of the party. On all sides you are disclaimed, yet among yourselves you still nourish the same fond fancies, and now, when disgraced and reproved, you talk of holy obedience to the Bishop, whose authority you declare to be from above, although this very authority is exercised to forbid the inculcation of discipline which you believe to have the same high origin. Is the house really divided against itself? Why then do not such considerations induce you to review for yourself all that has so often been said and written, to show you the feeble ground on which your church, so called, is built?"

Ella could not help being distressed when she felt that there was certainly truth in what Mr. Vernon said. Not choosing to answer him, she said, "What did Mrs. Monkton mean by talking of 'a mere historical question.' I asked Mr. Lester, and he said he supposed Mrs. Monkton alluded to what was called the 'Nag's Head Controversy,' but I thought that silly tale was never talked of now."

"Mrs. Monkton did not allude to the story you mention, which concerned the consecration of the first Elizabethan Bishops, and on which I will lay no stress whatever. She alluded to the consecration of your Protestant Archbishop Parker, from whom all your Clergy derive their orders, as you know."

“Yes—but there is no doubt about his consecration?”

“Catholics do not allow it.”

“How, Mr. Vernon? I know nothing of this, you allow that Barlow was a Bishop?”

“Barlow had been ordained Priest and Bishop in the Catholic Church. He became a Protestant and was degraded. At the time he was called on to consecrate Parker he had no see, nor otherwise any jurisdiction. He is called in Queen Elizabeth’s letters patent ‘Elect of Chichester.’ And the only authority for appointing him to that or any other see, to call it authority for a moment for the sake of argument, emanated from Queen Elizabeth. Thus he had no jurisdiction, and you are of course aware that jurisdiction is necessary for the due fulfilment of an ordination.”

“I was not aware of it,” said Ella, “nor can I see how it is necessary.”

“Priests or Bishops ordained by one so circumstanced, would undoubtedly be Priests and Bishops, but they would have no power to exercise their functions, they would have no jurisdiction, and the whole thing would be schismatical. The crown—the *Queen*, in your case gave jurisdiction, and the Clergy of the Establishment draw their *supposed* power to fulfil their duties from her.”

“Then you consider us to have an heretical schismatical succession?”

"No, Miss Eynon, I said your Clergy draw their *supposed* jurisdiction from Queen Elizabeth, but I must press another thing upon you by which it will appear that there was no ordination at all. Your existing ordination service, you have probably often read and admired. Are you aware that words marking the essential difference between the Episcopal office and consecration, and the Sacerdotal office and ordination, were only introduced, such as they are, after the Savoy Conference and the revision of the Prayer Book in 1661, when any such alteration was too late? In the ordinal used at Parker's supposed consecration, no words have been used which could confer Episcopal order. It *could not* consecrate: Parker remained what he was, a Priest. From him, all your Clergy derive their pretended orders. All this was so strongly felt in the course of time, that, in 1661, as I have said, it was altered to what now appears in the Anglican ordinal. But the alteration was then too late, supposing it to be now valid: for, in the hundred years previous, all succession had, of course, long ago become utterly extinct."

"I cannot receive this without examination, Mr. Vernon," said Ella. "The charges are certainly too serious to be passed over, and I cannot help wondering that I never heard of them before. But have those things always been felt to be as you relate them by the Catholic Church?"

“Always. At the time and ever since. For instance, Ridley, through consecrated with the true form, *i. e.*, according to the then extant English Pontifical as approved by the Holy see, was never acknowledged to be a Bishop by the Church, because the pretended consecration had been conferred by schismatics : but when he came to be degraded, he was degraded as a Priest. And this sets the case very strongly : for Parker had not even the true form : yet Ridley, who had, was no Bishop : so Bradford, too, who had been ordained Priest by the ‘Reformed,’ was not degraded at all, but proceeded with merely as a lay heretic. All Christendom, from one end of the world to the other, acknowledges this view. No Anglican ‘Bishop’ or ‘Priest’ is ever, or ever has been, received as one in any part of the Catholic Church. Even the Greek Church utterly disavows them. An English Bishop or Priest becoming a Catholic is received, of necessity, merely as a layman : and if he becomes a Catholic Ecclesiastic, he is ordained absolutely, without any qualification, condition or limit whatever.”

“Was there anything said at the time about the ordinal of Edward VI. which you call ‘inoperative?’” asked Ella.

“Much was said,” replied Mr. Vernon. “It was, as I have related, established by no ecclesiastical authority. It was refused by all the Catholic Bishops

of England and Ireland, and by the Pope, and was not acknowledged by any Catholic Synod or Country whatever. Indeed, at the time it was used it was contrary to the law of the land, and was not made legally valid till the 8th of Queen Elizabeth. I do not myself believe that there was any desire at the time to convey true canonical consecration, though great pains have since been taken to make the best of so miserable a transaction. The Queen claimed, in her commission, original and inherent jurisdiction, and pretended to heal all defects in those who acted at her command. The commission runs thus, '*Supplying nevertheless, by our Supreme Royal authority, whatever, either in the things which shall be done by you according to our foresaid mandate, or in you or any one of you in your condition, state, or power, for the purpose of executing the premises, may or shall be wanting of those things which by the statutes of this realm, or by the ecclesiastical laws, are required and necessary in that behalf, the reason of the time and the necessity of affairs demanding it.*' And she, poor wretched woman, seemed to feel at the last something of the evil she had committed, if we may give credit to the account of her expressions when visited on her death-bed by the Archbishop of Canterbury and other Prelates; bidding them be packing, for she knew full well they were but Hedge Priests.

"I cannot help regretting that no Catholic Bishop was employed at the consecration," said Ella.

“ Such a thing was impossible, and for this reason *among others*—no Catholic could have used the unmeaning ordinal. The Archbishop of York was a Catholic, but he would have nothing to do with the consecration, and the Archbishop of Armagh refused to be concerned in it, though he was in London. Elizabeth issued two commissions, and the first having had no effect whatever, at length the second was executed by William Barlow, formerly Bishop of Bath and Wells, and now, as described, elect of Chichester ; by John Scory, described as formerly Bishop of Chichester, now elect of Hereford ; Miles Coverdale, described as formerly Bishop of Exeter, and Richard Hodgskins, described as suffragan of Bedford. Into the case of the last three it is needless to enter, further than to say that they were none of them Bishops, for, as I have said, the whole case turns upon Barlow the supposed Consecrator, and the Ordinal used by him. Indeed the Ordinal was intrinsically invalid. The words used for making a Priest were only these : ‘ Take the Holy Ghost, and remember that thou stir up the Grace of God, which is in Thee by imposition of hands ; for God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love and soberness.’ Now these words convey no ‘ character ’ whatever. They neither consecrate, nor apparently pretend to consecrate, anything. They might with quite as much propriety be used to a female child at confirmation, as to a Bishop elect.”

"But," asked Ella, "was not *the intention* sufficient, the words were intended to be consecratory, and Barlow and those who assisted him intended to consecrate by them."

"No," replied Mr. Vernon, "anything which must be so purely precarious, can never for an instant be admitted. The Church never leaves her meaning unexpressed. She requires intention in the celebrant of her offices, but *she does not leave those offices to be filled up by it*. Where nothing is expressed there can be no certainty of the Church's intention: and from what does not exist it is totally impossible, with any safety, to presume an existence."

"And now, Mr. Vernon," said Ella—but there was a tremour in her voice, which she in vain attempted to disguise,—“what do you intend me to infer from all this?”

"Why do you desire me to say, what you have already guessed, Miss Eynon?"

"Because," answered Ella, and her voice had ceased to tremble, and she spoke with unwonted energy—"because I have a feeling of dislike to your relieving your conscience by halves, and to my being left to my own deductions. The deduction is plain enough certainly; but you believe that I have never yet been guided by a Priest, and as I, at least, believe you to be one, speak fully while I can listen. Answer my question, let me have *actual*, not *inferred*

responsibility, so tell me, what do you mean me to arrive at by all you have said ?”

Mr. Vernon very little expected such a demand as this. He felt that he had either said too little or too much, and the responsibility of a moment which was to deprive Ella for ever of any excuse for remaining out of the true Church, rose before him with almost overwhelming seriousness. The effect of such feelings passing rapidly through his mind, mingled with the deep interest he had long felt for Ella, was observable in Mr. Vernon’s flushed cheek and almost agitated manner, as, rising from his seat, he said with earnest solicitude ; “ The conclusion to which I would carry your mind is this ; and I urge it, as you have demanded it, under the responsibility of my holy office, that Parker’s supposed consecrations, and all the orders following upon them, are merely nullities : and that in the religion to which you belong, there now exists no jurisdiction, order, apostolical succession nor mission : neither are there, nor can there be, any sacraments, save baptism, which a layman or heretic may give.”

“ You have done your duty, sir,” said Ella, “ I feel bound to enquire into this—I—” But Ella could not go on, she turned her head aside, distressed and more disturbed than she liked to appear.

Mr. Vernon, who was in reality even more disturbed than herself, advanced abruptly to her, in-

tending to take leave ; but, overcome by his feelings he placed his hand on her head, and energetically begged God's blessing on her. In an instant more he was gone.

Mr. Vernon's way lay by the Abbey walls. He looked at it with a sad and earnest interest, and stepped within the protecting fence, passed up to the place of the High Altar, and, unseen and unheard by his fellow-men, poured forth his soul to God. Then returning to the path, with quickened steps he pursued the road to Monkton. Evening had closed in, the labourers had left their work, and a single star was peeping forth in the wide hemisphere. It was like the one bright hope which had sprung up in Mr. Vernon's heart, and which had long been deserted of such sweet solace. His life had been a dreary one. He had lived through times of depression and dejection, and at that season when, most of all, the spirit stirs to enterprize and activity, he had been forced by cruel circumstances to restrain his feelings, to keep under his holy desires, and almost to eradicate from his heart the missionary zeal which filled it. He had been more called on to suffer than to act, for the cause he loved. But if the necessity of the times had taught him the hardest of all the lessons of self-denial, even self-denial from good works, because they were inexpedient, not to say impossible of accomplishment, it had given him a

strength of character, a power of perseverance, and an inward fervour with which he might not otherwise have been blessed. He had been twenty-five years at Monkton, and the daily sacrifice had unceasingly been offered for his country and his home. All that had ever wandered from the fold had returned to his care, and as the population had increased the number of Catholics had increased, but not a convert had been made. Often when parties of sight-seeing travellers had asked to see the house, and had been shewn by him to the Chapel, he had anxiously watched them to see if any shewed a sense of pious awe when they entered, and beheld the burning lamp, and saw his lowly genuflection, but always he had been disappointed. Lately he had seen a better spirit arise, but he had not dared to hope that much real good would result from it. Indeed, he had feared that restored churches and revived customs might make the people more blind to that faith which had now little of the silver and gold and attractive things of the earth, to offer her English children. But when he knew Herbert Stafford, long dormant hopes revived, he saw that he was truly and heartily attached to his Anglican "Mother," but he also saw that he was intelligent, humble and sincere. Not in love with things only, but looking at principles and doctrines. Contending for fine altar and gold candlesticks, but keeping them in their true place of subserviency ; looking for more

than them ; even to the ancient faith, so generally forgotten, but yet, so Herbert contended, *not denied*. Then Mr. Vernon had hope.

His acquaintance with Lester increased that hope, and can we wonder that an intimate knowledge of Ella's principles and feelings had brought this hope to maturity. He could not, would not, doubt that Ella would be a Catholic. The patient waiting of a life would be repaid, even in this world repaid, and Mr. Vernon already felt the overflowing of a grateful heart. He had now arrived at Monkton. The old Mansion looked dreary and dark, and the entrance was obscured, but Mr. Vernon's practised steps soon reached, with unhesitating tread, his private door. He let himself in, barred and locked it after him, and guided by the lamp which burned in the chapel, turned aside and entered it.



CHAPTER X.

TRUTH ATTAINED,

THE next day passed, and not a word was heard of Ella at Monkton. But on the following day Mr. Vernon received a note. Ella had deeply reflected on all he had said to her ; she had said in their late interview that she must enquire into the correctness of his statements. She had applied to Lester, and repeated to him the substance of what Mr. Vernon had said, and Lester had acknowledged that he was not fully informed on the subject. He had thought it a traitorous act to enquire into the Anglican establishment's claim to being a Church. The spirit of obedience had led him to assume it as a fact ; and he had not examined what the other side might have to say. Indeed, he believed that individuals on the other side had thought that the English claim to Apostolical Succession might be granted. He, however, acknowledged that this had only appeared as individual opinion, and grounded on individual research, and that, from the first to the present moment of the existence of the Anglican Church, the claim of valid

ordination had always been positively denied, but on what exact evidence, or with what amount of fairness, he did not know. He then urged on Ella that there was a want of faith towards God and the church, to doubt that which by great blessings had been sufficiently proved. But this was not enough for Ella; she knew that such blessings might be argued by many bodies of dissenters for the rightness of their positions, for Almighty God had been pleased so to *bless*—if that word can be permitted—dissenting communities which were, notwithstanding, positively wrong. They had had their holy men, their times of religious awakening, their rapid extension, their examples of zeal, self-denial, perseverance, and they had appealed to these things. They had called them divine blessings, and proofs of the divine favour. Yet theirs was not the truth. She, therefore, could not admit such things as proofs of the truth in the Church of England. She could see that in proportion as the High Church party had embraced and taught Catholic Truth, so they had been blessed, but this was no proof of their being right. She had said she would inquire. Truth would stand investigation; and hoping that Anglicanism would come forth from the trial with honour, Ella commenced the work. Much she wished that her father might be asked to assist her, but his health made such a proposal obviously improper, and having told Miss Worth of her

intention, Ella asked Lester's assistance in the work. He frankly told her that he could not render her any—that he had already read the books which had fallen in his way on the subject, and that, for the contradiction or confirmation of the facts laid before her by Mr. Vernon, she must not refer to him. Therefore, Ella determined to write to Monkton. The note was to request that Mr. Vernon would send her some books, from which she might learn the sources of the information he had given her. With this Mr. Vernon immediately complied. He likewise offered to send her some Catholic religious books, hitherto probably unknown to her. This offer, in the course of a few weeks, was accepted. After a brief lapse of time, Mr. Vernon received an intimation that Miss Eynon would call at Monkton at any time when he could grant her an interview. Miss Eynon was affectionately received by Mrs. Monkton; the conversation with Mr. Vernon was satisfactory, and Ella expressed her intention of becoming a Catholic.

Neither Mr. Vernon nor Mrs. Monkton pressed her. They knew that, in her situation, much judgment and circumspection would be necessary. They could foresee that many and varied trials would await her. They had also the truest sympathy in her feelings towards her father, he being sick and infirm, and herself under age. Contenting themselves with earnestly commending her to God and our Blessed Lady,

they left her to form her own unbiassed opinion as to the course of action which lay before her. There was no need of professions of friendship ; but each promised to pray for her, and Mr. Vernon, she knew, would remember her at the altar. On leaving the house, Mrs. Monkton put a small morocco case into her hand, which Ella, nearly overpowered by emotion, took without any observation. When she reached Thornberry, the home of her affections, she rushed at once to her own little sitting-room, and locking the door, gave full vent to her pent-up feelings. She wept long, and, when she thought of her father, bitterly. She thought too of Herbert. How could she, a young weak woman, dare to form so strong a judgment ?—dare to take so positive a step ? Till now, she had always followed—gently followed those—whose right it was to lead,—could she now stand alone and dare all,—do all,—suffer all in her unassisted strength ? Her woman's heart quailed within her. But—WAS SHE RIGHT ? That question was answered without doubt, fear, or hesitation ; her reason was convinced, and her heart told her truly that she had now found a mother indeed. Comforted by this change of thought, she advanced to the window—there lay the case which Mrs. Monkton had given her ; she opened it, and saw for the first time a crucifix. Often as the same figure had been seen in paintings and in prints, the sight of it thus represented awakened sen-

sations never felt before. Involuntarily she fell upon her knees. Lifting up her eyes for a moment, the view of the Abbey ruins caught her sight. The bright sun rested on the steep gable of the East end, and the stream at its base sparkled, as it appeared at intervals among the trees. She thought of the awful alienation that had taken it from its rightful owners. She thought of Herbert and Lester discovering the sanctuary, she recollected that *there* was the place where she had first met a Catholic priest, and first heard the claims of the true Church vindicated. Earnestly she prayed, holding the crucifix in her clasped hands, that Herbert, her father, and herself, might be remembered and accepted above, and fervently she vowed that, as a restitution and a thank offering, the Abbey and its lands should return to the Catholic Church, should she ever have the power of bestowing them.

Strengthened by the resolution, and satisfied of the approbation and favour of God, Ella turned her mind to the consideration of her conduct towards her father. Unable to come to a conclusion on so tender a point, she determined to tell Lester and Miss Worth of her intended reconciliation to the Roman Communion, and ask their advice. This was soon done, but they were both so much overpowered by the information that they seemed unable to assist her. Again and again Lester went over the old ground, but

the arguments had lost their effect ; everything he had said was grounded on the assumed fact of the establishment being a true Church ; and such Ella no longer believed it. She had to argue in her turn till both were too much agitated and distressed to proceed. The conference was therefore concluded by Ella's pressing Lester to take her books, and the extracts, memoranda and remarks she had made, to consider them at his leisure, and till then to defer all conversation on the subject, but, in the meantime, to assist her with advice as to what was to be done about her father. On this matter Lester promised to speak to her, after consulting Miss Worth on the following day. And now, Ella's heart was asking what was to be done about Herbert? She so ardently longed for his presence that she almost determined on asking for his return, without giving a reason ; and immediately afterwards she thought that, as soon as her conduct towards her father was fixed that she ought to tell Herbert everything. However, her conduct towards both persons was settled for her.

Mr. Lester and Miss Worth, after a long consultation, in which Ella's feelings and her filial duties were wisely and kindly considered, came to the same opinion, and, seeking Ella in her sitting-room, they very earnestly pressed their proposal on her. It was this. That she should remain perfectly silent on the subject of her faith for six months. That during that

time she should consent to hear or read whatever her two friends thought was suited to her position ; that during that time she should not go to mass, but attend the service of the Church of England, but not be expected to join in their "holy communion;" and finally, that she should not go to Monkton oftener than usual, or at all alone, or see any Catholic, except in Miss Worth's or Mr. Lester's presence. "Do this," they said, "for six months—it is only giving a proper trial to your newly formed opinions. While you are under this sort of discipline there will be no occasion to speak to your father on the subject. At the end of the six months, if you are still of the same opinion, he must of course be told, and the knowledge that you have, with our knowledge, gone through this trial, will relieve him of much responsibility, and by convincing him of your sincerity do more to console him than any thing that could be done now." And then Lester urged that Herbert should immediately be summoned home. He thought him more likely than any one else to influence Ella ; but this last was strenuously resisted,—perhaps Ella might have distrusted herself. However, she urged that Herbert had promised to shorten his absence, that it was not likely to be more than six months before he returned, and that this would suit her better than the proposed alteration. She postponed a final answer to the first proposition till she could consult Mr. Vernon. The result was

that she consented to the six months of silence and patience, with the accompanying stipulations, and the minds of her friends were in some measure relieved.

Her friends were faithful to their supposed duties, and Ella as faithful to her promises. She read all that was given to her, listened to all that was said to her, and not with inattention, but with an impartial judgment, and with all the diligence and discrimination of which she was capable. But all was useless. The anchor which had kept her steady before was gone. There was no church, no priests, no sacraments. Beautiful as the Church of England might be made exteriorly, within there was no heart. It was mechanism, not life, by which she appeared to be animated; and before half of the six months was over, she shrunk with commiseration from that delusive thing, which looked so right and was so wrong. How her soul yearned towards the striving, the true hearted members of this wonderful delusion, no words can tell. *So like* the truth, so *almost* Catholic might her members be, so strongly did she appeal to their best feelings,—to their gratitude, their love, their obedience. Well might Ella feel, and feel acutely, for those who, from a thousand amiable feelings, remained in her, who did not disguise her faults, who truly worked hard to repair her failings, but who, because they believed her foundations were good, would not turn aside from their hard toil and thank-

less task. For such she prayed, but for Herbert—for her father—What felt she for them? Only those who have been circumstanced as she was, can in any adequate degree sympathize with her. Three months of discipline had passed, when an unexpected event occurred—Herbert suddenly returned to England. As soon as the speediest travelling permitted he was at Thornberry. More than a year and quarter had elapsed since his friends had said farewell, and now full of joy was his welcome. Will Ella's ear ever forget the sound of his step at the door, or his voice in the hall? or her eye lose the power of recalling his face and figure, as once again he stood before his betrothed wife?—Never.—She longed to be alone with him. She longed to speak to him, as from her cradle she had been accustomed to speak to him,—she longed to tell him ALL. She asked of Miss Worth and Mr. Lester leave to make the whole known to Herbert. But they steadfastly refused. “No,” they said, “if you tell Herbert you must also tell your father.” That, each felt, though for different reasons, to be undesirable; so Herbert was not told.

The fact of concealing anything from Herbert threw over Ella's manner an air of restraint which she in vain laboured to overcome; she thought that Herbert saw it, and that it acted as a restraint on him, for certainly, though he told the events of his journeyings with great spirit and accuracy when they

were altogether, yet when they were alone they were each of them silent and constrained, till, by mutual efforts, the feeling was overcome, but overcome only for a time ; soon they relapsed into silence, and Ella was glad to find that Herbert intended to return immediately to London, to arrange some affairs which required his personal attendance. Anxiety to see his friends after his long absence had prevented his doing this when he landed. He said he should not be absent long.—“ Not more than ten days or a fortnight at the utmost, dear Ella, and then I shall have time to tell you all that happened while I was abroad, and you must promise to listen with great indulgence.” Of course Ella promised, and Herbert left them.

It was on a Saturday. He set off on foot to Thornberry, where the public conveyance passed in which he was to become a passenger. His walk lay through the fields. On getting over a stile he came unexpectedly on Mr. Barrington Martin. There was a sudden and cordial greeting. Mr. Barrington Martin had not known of Herbert's return. After a few commonplace expressions, Mr. Barrington Martin asked Herbert to do his duty for him the next morning. Herbert could not : he was going to London. Mr. Barrington Martin said that he had long wished to pay a visit to a friend on an affair of some importance, which would require a short time for its proper adjustment. “ May I,” he asked, “ make this arrange-

ment now, which will be a great relief to my mind—with the understanding that, when you return, you will take my church, if only for a single Sunday.”

Herbert hesitated, and then said, “I will not lead you to false conclusions, Mr. Martin, and though I feel this to be rather an unfortunate interview, I will not say anything which, hereafter, I might regret as having had too much the air of an injudicious compromise of conscience. I shall never be able to serve your Church, and I place the reason in your possession in perfect reliance on your gentlemanly feeling. I have ceased to be a member of the Church of England. *I am a Catholic.*” “I AM A CATHOLIC,” repeated Herbert, seeing that Mr. Barrington Martin looked as if stupified with astonishment; “I depend on your correct feeling not to speak of it till I have myself announced it in the proper quarter.”

CHAPTER XI.

REFORMATION MEETING AT BELLE VUE.

ASTONISHED and oppressed with the weight of this secret, Mr. Barrington Martin pursued his way to Belle Vue. He had appreciated Herbert's straightforward conduct at the moment. He had felt that there was even something quite chivalric in his scorning to use any excuse, which, hereafter, when the true reason was known, might have appeared like a form of subterfuge. Mr. Barrington Martin also knew that *he* was not the person whom Herbert would have *chosen* for a confidant, and that he owed the possession of the secret to a high sense of honour, and to that tenacity of truth by which Herbert had ever been distinguished. And Mr. Martin, as he walked across the park, wondered and admired. He sought, as he always did on great occasions, his mother and his wife, and, to their infinite surprise, related what he had heard.

He was questioned and cross-examined, but there could be no mistake: the facts were few, the evidence positive; and Herbert Stafford, the intended hus-

band of the heiress of Thornberry, he who was likely to succeed Mr. Eynon as one of the most influential men in the county, he, actually, was a Catholic.

There was a long silence. The astonishment created was too much for words. Their minds rested on the one feeling, that a great occurrence, big with results which might influence the whole neighbourhood, had positively taken place. And no one knew it but themselves. Long was the silence. But it was broken at length by Mrs. Martin.

"It is wonderful!" she said; "past finding out. But how plain a Providence it is that Mr. Millar should have proposed next week for the Reformation Meeting here. Have you answered his letter?"

"I intended doing so this morning, and desiring him to take us on his return, but I omitted writing."

"Another Providence," replied his wife. "It is extraordinary to trace the small things on which great results depend. You, who are so habitually punctual, have omitted writing to postpone what now it appears so positive a duty to hasten. It is nothing short of a Providence. How long will Mr. Stafford be away?"

"A fortnight at the furthest, I think he said," answered Mr. Martin.

"How much may be done, if we are faithful, in that time? The path was never made more straight

to us in all our lives. See how plainly you are marked out as the instrument of good in this extraordinary case, dear Barrington. Mr. Millar writes to you to postpone a Reformation Meeting here next week. You, thinking of a trifling engagement, desire to postpone it ; but you are led to forget your intention of writing. During the time which you think lost by this remarkable omission, you walk out, meet a man who you think is in Italy, and hear from him the extraordinary intelligence of the dreadful abomination of Popery, with its usual stealthy steps, having come positively into our neighbourhood,—advanced close to us unperceived. Can anything more clearly show that you are called upon,—yes, positively marked out, to unmask this deceitful foe ? Thanks to the over-ruling hand, the people will not be snared unwarned, or taken unprepared. A sentinel has been chosen and his voice will be heard. ‘ Cry aloud,’ my husband, ‘ spare not,’ truly I may say to you, ‘ thou art the man.’ ”

Here Lady Martin interposed, affected even to tears at the evident manifestation which had so clearly directed her son’s conduct. That he should be called so clearly to so great a work ! And she was pathetic in her “ spirit of thanksgiving.”

Mr. Barrington Martin, for the first time in his life, felt averse to the course proposed by his female advisers. He urged that Herbert had expressed his dependence on his honourable secrecy. His wife and

mother reiterated all that they had said before. "He was the instrument ;"—"he must not turn back ;"—"he must not shrink ;" besides, "he had never *promised* secrecy."

"No," said Barrington, musingly, "I never promised ; I certainly made no reply."

"You were withheld," said his lady, "an unseen power withheld you. It is all that is necessary to make your mind clear. You were not allowed to promise, because you were intended to warn."

"It would be impossible to mention Herbert Stafford at a public meeting," urged Mr. Martin.

"Of course it would," exclaimed both ladies at once. "Highly uncharitable to mention any name, but you must, notwithstanding, give warning of the enemy's approach, or you will for ever deplore your unfaithfulness."

Mr. Barrington Martin was convinced; the letter fixing the Reformation Meeting was written ; and when Mr. Millar was informed, quite confidentially, of THE SECRET, he agreed with the ladies ; and Mr. Martin, persuading himself that he was called to a great work, diligently studied his speech, and planned the points of particular effect.

The day, or rather the evening, arrived. A large party were assembled in the house. Not one word of Herbert Stafford had transpired. The school-room was crowded. Mrs. Hardy had induced numbers of the disaffected of Thornberry to come, "for the

truth's sake," as she called it, and many indifferent ones to come, "because Mr. Millar's speaking was quite a lesson in oratory." So, from various motives various people came, and the meeting was full. Mr. Smith, a Presbyterian, opened the meeting by what the newspapers recording the proceedings called "being engaged in prayer;" to which the people listened; being extempore, and on no previously fixed subject, and, in fact, embracing a variety of topics, it was impossible to join in it. The people were then informed, that, in the absence of his brother Sir Alexander, Mr. Barrington Martin would take the chair; and that gentleman then addressed the meeting in a speech introductory of Mr. Millar, saying, that he deferred speaking at any length himself, till they had heard the sad but interesting truths which his excellent friend would detail to them. After this, and the usual preliminaries of such meetings, Mr. Millar made his speech. All the usual things were said, all the usual false statements reiterated, all the usual ignorance displayed,—but so well was the thing done, so captivating was the speaker's manners and appearance, so seducing his air of candour, and so infectious his fanaticism, that the passions of the people were soon enlisted in his favour. The Catholic Faith was held up as the "Apostacy foretold of God;" as "the grossest idolatry," and the curse and plague of England; of their beloved country, their

dear native land, the happy home of their Protestant forefathers. This happy home was then pictured as if it had in it neither care nor sorrow, destitution, nor discontent : no jails for misguided youth, no union houses for unfortunate manhood or respectable age, as if it had but one misery, and that Popery. Then Religious Houses were referred to ; the neighbouring Abbey they all knew so well ; and they were told of crimes too horrid to name, too many to enumerate, which had caused its demolition,—an assertion in direct opposition to historical truth. They were told of lazy monks and useless abbots. But they were not told of their benefactions to all classes, of their being the preservers of literature, the improvers of agriculture, of their unceasing prayers, or of their pure perpetual alms. The man whose knowledge was as incomplete as Mr. Millar's, whose chief talent lay in putting popularly and ingeniously the lies he had received on the word of others whose imaginations were as heated and disordered as his own, was not likely to disentangle such truths from the mass of error with which the wicked, the careless, and the credulous had overlaid them. So he went on in the same strain, enchanting his audience by the grace of his oratory, till, when he had reached the climax, and cried, "Down with the unchangeable Papacy!—Down with Image worship and with Idolatry!—Down with the man of sin! Down with that Foul Faith

which is bringing the curse of God on our dear and beloved land!"—his hearers were ready for any violence to which circumstances might have tempted them. All hearts were throbbing and all eyes flashing, many were in tears of excitement, and all joined in the burst of rapturous applause which greeted the conclusion of Mr. Millar's speech.

It was now Mr. Barrington Martin's turn to address the assembly. His very quiet and gentle manner was rather agreeable after the late outpouring. He told them, that they had now heard what Popery was. The acclamations he had just heard convinced him that they knew what it was, and were ready to band together for its destruction—to band together under one motto—"No peace with Rome." They had heard it rightly called the MYSTERY OF TREACHERY. But he must warn them that this thing, rightly named Treachery, had come very near to each one of them. He must warn them against Popery in the garb of the Church of England! When a great deal had been said in this strain the important subject was approached—"that this improper straining of Church doctrines did lead to Rome there could be no doubt. He wished he could doubt it. But the time was come when in advocating the principles of the glorious Reformation, they were vindicating the rights of their own fire-side. Romanism had come in with insidious steps, to deprive old age of its joy, youth of its hope,

and the country of a friend. Such were the treacherous, the guilty deeds, she gloried in." After much sensation had been exhibited in the meeting, cries of "go on," were heard, to which Mr. Barrington Martin responded—"It was not an imaginative scene that he was sketching. It was true—alas! too true. Soon they would all know about it. It was not for him to be the means of propagating the report of the calamity, indeed the contrary, but he could not keep silence when called upon to raise the voice of warning. He would not hide his light when he was commanded to let it burn forth. He knew that many persons had said, that such meetings as these were injurious to public feeling, that they bred strife and discord.—Yes, but strife against whom, and discord with whom. There was a saying 'Unwarned unarmed,'—but they should neither be unwarned nor unarmed if he could prevent it. They would soon acknowledge that this was *not* an inopportune moment in which to expose the abominations of Popery. They would soon know to what it had been his painful duty to allude that night, and when they heard it, let them recollect what his dear brother and friend Mr. Millar had told them of Popery."

"He had unmasked the man of sin, and taken from the beast his disguise. Now, if they should soon see, or ever see, one whom they loved and respected,—one who, on account of certain expectations, was

looked on as a neighbour, a person of influence, hitherto admired,—if they should ever see such a one bearing the mark of that beast, let them recollect what they had heard that night, and be true to the cause of Protestantism and the blessed Reformation. He knew that what he had said would be animadverted upon ; he knew that he should lose the favour of men by his faithfulness to them. He knew he should be accused of unchristian feeling, and of stirring up strife in families, and, as had often been the case, he should be reminded that he was a ‘ Minister of Peace.’ *A Minister of Peace*—that is what their enemies were always saying to make them hold their tongues. They think to take them on the side of their duties, and so keep them silent,—dumb dogs. But no. This was only another form of ‘ *speaking lies in hypocrisy* ;’ he did not know why he was to be told to be a Minister of Peace ; the clergy were no where called so in the Bible, quite the contrary. They were followers of one who came not to bring peace but a sword ; and therefore, though he knew how much he should be spoken against, thoughtless of himself and thoughtless of others in matters of feeling when the truth was at stake, he repeated to them his warning to observe the signs of the times, and when the event he had alluded to was brought openly before them, neither to be discouraged nor distrustful. Anti-Christ was Anti-Christ still,

notwithstanding the speciousness of her appearance. He would now conclude with one word—*Beware.*”

This address had its due effect. The love of the marvellous had been thoroughly excited, and the greater part of the people having imagined Mr. Barrington Martin to be alluding to Lester, they all agreed to absent themselves from Thornberry Church the following Sunday. The day came, and Lester read the service and preached to Mr. Eynon’s household and two old women.

Lester had borne all his trials and vexations with a truly heroic spirit. Throughout he had preserved his presence of mind, and the animating sense that the sad troubles, in which many besides himself were embroiled, would lead to some great good, if they remained firm to their principles, and faithful and true to the Bishops of the Church under whose authority they were. When Ella despaired he was hopeful; when Miss Worth felt a virtuous indignation he was patient and cheerful; and when Mr. Eynon, whose weak health had suffered very visibly from the troubled times, held out his hand to him with shaking nerves and tearful eyes, Lester’s clear voice spoke of better times, and of his own unabated ardour and zeal in the good cause. Mrs. Hardy said that Mr. Lester had *such* spirits, nothing affected him. He had no feelings she was sure. We need not say that Mrs. Hardy knew nothing about it.

Lester felt chiefly the impossibility of teaching the truths he so firmly held. *The whole* of these truths he had never dared to teach. The people were manifestly unfit to receive them. But he had been obliged to discontinue a course of sermons which he believed to be not only well suited to the times, but necessary to the right discharge of his duties. The congregation would not hear them, and, though he intended to publish them for his own vindication, yet he deeply felt the injurious precedent which the unequal contest was establishing. As to the present desertion, he knew its cause. The Reformation meeting had produced a most unwholesome state of feeling among the people, and the consequence was a series of petty insults, and the gross misconduct of preferring the Church at Belle Vue, or any dissenting meeting house, to their own church. Lester knew that till the "No Popery" cry was exhausted, there could be no return to better things. And against such trials it was very hard to bear up valiantly; and Ella's desertion of the cause, the cruel certainty he felt of her eventually becoming a member of the church of Rome, weighed on his mind and made his trials more severe. He felt himself deprived of sympathy. He could not tell her of his troubles as he had been used to do. It would only be providing her with weapons for resisting his steady efforts to persuade her to remain in the Anglican Church. He had hoped for

consolation from Herbert. To him he had poured out his troubles. But nothing could have been more unsatisfactory than Herbert; indeed, he had positively postponed talking to him till his return to Thornberry. So Lester went on with his daily services to almost empty walls, and preached another sermon on the next Sunday to the same scanty audience.

In the meantime an account of the Reformation meeting at Belle Vue appeared in one of the provincial papers. The speeches were not given at length, but enough of Mr. Barrington Martin's appeared to place Lester in the depths of bewilderment. His disgust and displeasure were boundless as his astonishment.

That the Rev. gentleman *had alluded to Ella* he could not doubt, but how he had gained his information was an unfathomable mystery. Lester acted on the first impulse, and walked to Thornberry, taking the paper with him. The first person he saw was Ella, and the first question he asked was for her Father.

"My Father is not well," she replied, "indeed he has not been well for several days—our parish troubles have weighed too much on his mind, so much, Mr. Lester, that I sometimes feel that I shall never have courage to tell him about myself," and Ella turned aside her head to hide her tears.

"No Religion can oblige you to make so good a Father miserable, Miss Eynon" said Lester gravely; "you surely will admit that. And moreover, while you are under age, it would be most improper to commit yourself to so immense an act of private judgment at so fearful a cost."

"My six months' probation is not over," said Ella, "till then, it would only be depressing and exhausting to allow my thoughts to dwell on the subject. But to return to my Father, he is very unwell to-day. He took too long a walk this morning, and felt the warmth too much for him, and since then he has seen something in the newspaper which has annoyed him extremely. I don't know what it is; and he has refused to let me see it."

"Where is Miss Worth," asked Lester. Ella told him and he went to her.

"There is a sad trial in store for Miss Eynon," he said; and after reading the paragraph he asked how so secret a thing could have transpired.

"Only through those who knew it at Monkton," said Miss Worth.

"But her Father has seen it, and I never saw him so much disturbed about anything. He has not been well lately, and now I am alarmed for him, for"—and Miss Worth hesitated a moment, "for, Mr. Lester, he thinks that it alludes to *you*, and as he cannot suppose that Mr. Martin

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would have made such public allusions to anything of which he was not certain, he really is exceedingly miserable about you. I had a wretched interview with him a few hours since ; of course I could not say that I believed Ella to be the person alluded to, and therefore could not succeed in relieving him from the more natural impression about yourself. I have no doubt that you are suspected far and wide, and that it has been the cause of your deserted Church."

"This is the worst trial of all," groaned Lester. "Poor Mr. Eynon ! it will be his death if he knows about his daughter, besides which, to confess it now will confirm her in her resolution, and leaves us no chance of her changing it. But how my character can otherwise be vindicated I know not. However, I shall instantly go to Monkton and learn there who the traitor is."

Lester asked to see Mr. Vernon, and was shown into his study. Lester could not take the hand extended to him. But he held the paper, and asked what light could be thrown on that report of Mr. Martin's speech.

"Do not suspect me, Mr. Lester," said Mr. Vernon, with a frank yet sympathizing air. "I was myself unspeakably surprised at it. I first thought of Miss Eynon, so I went instantly to Belle Vue. Mr. Martin and I have had one or two conferences, not of

the most cordial kind, but still we know each other. I saw him alone, and asked him at once if he would be so good as to name the person to whom he had alluded. He refused, but his reply was nevertheless satisfactory. It was in these words :—‘ No, sir, *the gentleman* desires to announce his apostacy himself.’ Excuse me, Mr. Lester,” continued Mr. Vernon, “ but are my hopes on your account as groundless as my fears on Miss Eynon’s ?”

“ Your hopes *are* groundless, Mr. Vernon,” said Lester, “ and I thank God our fears are so. Indeed, I believe her father, in his present state of health, would never survive the trial of knowing the truth. But how I am to extricate myself from the effects of this man’s talking, I know not.” After a silence, Lester said, “ How you must pity the Church of England, Mr. Vernon.”

“ Nay, my friend, I cannot ; I may not pity her. In my acceptance she is not a Church. But I do most heartily lament over all such as yourself, who are in her. Your inconsistencies, if you will forgive so plain a word, are so interesting, and so loudly call for our love and our prayers.”

“ And what,” asked Lester, “ do you think of the other party, they who have forced the Anglican Church into puritanism ?”

“ Their mouths are so full of blasphemies,” said Mr. Vernon with indignation, “ that I can only hope

that they know not what they say. But rather, let me ask, what *you* think of people in your own communion, who speak of the Blessed Sacrament thus, 'they make a god of a little bread and water, and fall down and worship it?' Has your Church no anathema for words like these. Has she no voice to say whether their party or yours is right? Indeed, Mr. Lester, no Catholic can understand such contradictions as these. However ingenious your excuses may be, however plausible your arguments, such things as these can never be understood by the Catholic. In your own person you are experiencing the total unreality of everything about you: the entire impossibility of doing your obvious duties. You are ruled by a mob, and well you may be. What man made, man can unmake. Surely this turbulent spirit, which is not new, which has ever been an ingredient, and a triumphant ingredient, in your system, should teach you to inquire more diligently into the reality of her claims. What are you fighting for?"

"No more, no more, Mr. Vernon," said Lester hastily. "Our business is concluded for to-day."

They shook hands in silence, and Lester, deeply occupied with his own reflections, returned to Thornberry.



CHAPTER XII.

RESULTS.

AMONG those who had attended the Reformation Meeting at Belle Vue, not one had listened with more wonder and greater appetite than Mrs. Hardy. Mr. Millar's speech had excited her to such a degree that she had herself joined in the applause with no small vehemence. But when Mr. Martin spoke, her heart was touched indeed. Popery in general terms, Popery existing in England, Ireland, Scotland, Italy, Germany, France, anywhere, everywhere, was very terrible, indeed, enough to awaken all her hatred, anger, and ill-speaking ; but Popery at Thornberry, there was something in that which awakened an interest such as could not be awakened by whole holocausts of Idolators elsewhere. A Papist at Thornberry ! Who was it ? *Mr. Lester, of course.* No sooner was the meeting over than Mrs. Hardy sought Lady Martin, and Lady Martin finding that her friend had fixed the abomination on Mr. Lester, told the truth from a simple sense of justice. She said, also, that Herbert Stafford had

not told Mr. Eynon or any of that party. However, the ladies agreed that any delay in such a matter was highly dishonourable, and could be for no good purpose.

"But," said Lady Martin, with seeming self-reproach, "it is several days since he told Barrington, perhaps they know it by this time."

"Several days," repeated Mrs. Hardy, "Oh! of course they do."—But in her heart she felt sure that they did not know it.

Mrs. Hardy had not suspected the effect which Mr. Martin's speech would have on Mr. Lester's congregation, but when the result was seen, she felt no surprise; they had only formed a like judgment with her own, till better instructed in Lady Martin's boudoir. She felt a passing sorrow for Lester, and a sense of the injustice under which, in this particular instance, he suffered. She would have liked to tell the people that their suspicions were misplaced, but that was impossible; she would have liked Lester to know that she was not a party in the popular error, but that was equally impossible. She could not criminate Lady Martin, but she longed to vindicate herself, and if possible to convince Lester and Mr. Eynon of her superior knowledge. Then her thoughts took another turn: she thought Mr. Eynon *ought* to be told of Herbert's apostacy. She had no doubt that this delay was to secure most effectually the marriage with

Ella. When they had agreed together, Mr. Eynon, between them both, would be over-persuaded to allow their union. He certainly ought to be told, or at least put upon his guard. If his suspicions could be awakened, he would enquire for himself; and when he saw that there had been, which there certainly was, a desire on Herbert's mind to deceive him, then she was sure the marriage would be prevented. This might be done without names being mentioned, so that Lady Martin would have no cause to blame her; and hereafter, when the real truth did come out, the fact of her having written to Mr. Eynon would show that she had not given the popular interpretation to Mr. Martin's speech, and suspected Mr. Lester. All this having been fully dwelt upon by the intriguing lady, she wrote the following note to Mr. Eynon, and while Lester was at Monkton the epistle was sent and delivered.

“My dear Sir,

“If any excuse is necessary to introduce a few words of sympathy from an old friend, I am sure that your own feelings on this trying occasion will be the best excuse for this expression of mine. Yet I know that to you the blow is more severe than it can be to me, for obvious reasons, and particularly because I have from the very first been blessed with a clear view of the dreadful and Popish tendency of these new

doctrines introduced by too many of the young ministry into our beloved Church. Allow me to intrude yet further upon you, and to mention your daughter. I had once the right to be deeply interested in her religious life, and I shall never cease to pray for her. Dear Sir, Roman doctrine is so craftily suited to the impulses of our fallen nature, and particularly to the indiscrete ardour of youth, and the weakness of our sex, that only a father's authority, and its powerful interposition, will keep your child free from its baneful influence. It will be a great trial for you, but that you may be blessed with strength to lay on her those restrictions necessary for her soul's health, and not through natural affection turn back in the day of battle, is the earnest prayer of your faithful friend,

“ELLEN HARDY.”

The letter had been brought to Mr. Eynon in his study, where he was vainly trying to compose his agitated mind and still the thrillings of his head and heart. The servant gave it and withdrew.

When Lester reached Thornberry he found Miss Worth, and told her the result of his interview with Mr. Vernon, and his belief that the secret about Ella was safe, and that the audacious newspaper report had really alluded to himself. “I will now see Mr. Eynon,” said Lester, “and quiet his mind about myself, if possible.” He went to Mr. Eynon's study ; spoke cheerfully

as he entered, but no notice was taken. Lester, alarmed, walked up to the place where Mr. Eynon was sitting, and to his inexpressible sorrow found him insensible. Mrs. Hardy's letter lay on the ground at his feet. Mr. Eynon was not dead, and medical aid being instantly called in, he, after a short time, recovered his consciousness, but in a most distressing manner: though occasionally recognizing those about him, he was at other times delirious, and in his incoherent talk he mentioned Lester, calling him a Roman Catholic, and asking if he were obliged to banish him from his house. Lester, Ella, and Miss Worth, scarcely ever left his bed-side for two days and nights, when he suddenly appeared to be much better, knowing them perfectly, and recovering his senses. But it was to tell them that death was at hand. He knew that he was dying fast. Lester proposed his receiving "Holy Communion."

"Are you a Roman Catholic?" asked Mr. Eynon.

"No, sir," was Lester's firm reply.

"What did that paragraph in the paper mean, and Mrs. Hardy's note?"

"I don't know, sir—it is a mystery to all of us."

"Then, by God's blessing, I will receive the Sacrament at your hands, my dear friend, and"—

Mr. Eynon's breath seemed failing—he looked at Ella, and spoke again.

"I should have liked to have given your hand to

Herbert, my child."—Again Mr. Eynon gasped for breath.—"Lift me up, I am dying," he said. Mr. Lester raised him in the bed, and supported him in his arms. He bid Ella fetch Miss Worth and ring the bell. Ella flew to the door, and then her father's voice arrested her steps. "I die," he said, in a low yet distinct voice—"I die in the faith of the One Holy Catholic Church. I would confess my sins and receive her absolution, and the body and blood of my Lord, but the time is short." Mr. Eynon was unable to speak more, and his servant having taken Lester's place, Lester, perceiving that Mr. Eynon was still sensible, repeated in a low clear voice the creed. The sick man evidently understood him, bowing his head to each article of belief. Lester then repeated the confession of sin in the Communion service, to which the same distinct signs of assent were given. When that was over Lester paused. Mr. Eynon raised himself up, gazed on him with an earnest expression of inquiry, and then bowed his head on his breast and closed his eyes. The head was never raised, nor the eyes opened to this life any more.

It was the day after the funeral. Ella, though now her own Mistress, did not feel at liberty to break an agreement made under other circumstances to her friends. Putting her arm within Miss Worth's, as that good lady paced the old Hall, absorbed in her reflections, she said, "I have had a note from

Herbert asking me to speak to him alone in the library. The time of my telling him of my change of faith should not be postponed."

"Yes, tell him, my dear child," said Miss Worth, "I do not desire to encompass you with unnecessary difficulties," and Ella, who was going to ask with some alarm if she foresaw any difficulties in this interview with Herbert, was silenced and re-assured by the loving benevolence of her countenance and manner. The truth was, that Herbert had that very morning told Miss Worth and Mr. Lester of his having become a Catholic during his residence abroad, a communication which of course entirely explained the incident of the newspaper paragraph, as Herbert had also mentioned his confidential conversation with Mr. Barrington Martin. The interview had been a long one, for although Herbert had been absent only the proposed fortnight, much, as the reader knows, had taken place meanwhile. All these things were fully discussed, all was told, except the one thing which only Ella could tell with propriety, that she was in heart a Catholic, and would now doubtless immediately make her profession of faith. Possessed of this knowledge they could not sympathize with Herbert as to the way in which Ella might receive the account of his conversion. They were steadily silent, and their silence made Herbert more than ever anxious; the result was, the request we have mentioned, to see Ella

alone. With a beating heart, yet glad to be freed from the harrass of concealment, Ella met Herbert in the library. The loss so lately sustained and so deeply felt would have prevented either of them from entering with interest on any less important subject than that which now brought them together, each unconscious of the other's sentiments. Ella begun, "I am glad you asked for this interview, dear Herbert, for I have much to say to you : much which may materially affect our future lives : much, which will grieve you, I fear, and be all the greater grief to you because you are a Clergyman. Ah, dear Herbert, I can scarcely dare to tell you. I wish you were not a Clergyman. I wish—"

"You have your wish, Ella," said Herbert, gravely, "*I am not a Clergyman.* I do not know what agitates you, unless your late annoyances so sadly connected with our lamented loss have made you suspicious of the principles of the Anglican Clergy, and in that case I shall unavoidably confirm them. But I must tell you at once, at all costs, that I have left the Church of England, that I am a Catholic, and in the sight of all Christendom, Great Britain only excepted, I am a layman, and have never been otherwise. And now tell me that this does not affect our mutual relation to each other : tell me that you, whom I have loved from your cradle, will yet be my wife, death alone dissolving a tie which literally commenced at your birth?"

Ella's answer was all that Herbert wished, more, far more, than he had ventured to expect. And now no further delay of Ella's reception was demanded by either Lester or Miss Worth. Her profession was made in the Chapel at Monkton, and the next Sunday, Ella and Herbert received private communion at an early hour. The fact was not known immediately ; not till Mrs. Hardy had wondered that only Miss Worth had been to Thornberry Church, and expressed her opinion of the flagrant impropriety of Miss Eynon's remaining at home with Mr. Stafford. But when the truth came out, the excitement was more than even Mrs. Hardy's strength could bear. Miss Eynon had not staid at home with Mr. Stafford. Mr. Stafford was a guest at Monkton, and the Mistress of Thornberry was in her own house ; but the great fact remained unchanged,—they both were Catholics. Many were the annoyances which pressed upon Ella. It was currently reported that Mr. Stafford's conversion had been the death of Mr. Eynon, and that no greater impropriety could be committed than for her to marry a man, who was audaciously called 'her Father's murderer.' Added to this, letters poured in on every side, of a most unpleasant character generally, but now and then Ella had a reward from some unexpected quarter. But she found, as all others similarly circumstanced have found, that the task of trying to convince people against their will, is both thankless

and hopeless. It was not an ~~occasion~~ which could be passed over by Lady Martin without relieving her conscience of "the Message" with which it was oppressed. Ella received from her the following note.

"My dear Miss Eynon,

" Having heard of your union with the Church of Rome, I cannot help saying a few words on the painful subject. Oh ! as a Christian friend, I intreat you to pause in your fearful career ; it is not too late to retrace your way. I know too well what Romanism is. How it keeps light from the people. How the Priests will not allow them to go to the law and the testimony. This is the rock on which Romanists split. Their whole system is and must be false, because they will not take the Bible for their rule of faith, but, like the Pharisees 'make void the Commandment of God, through their traditions, and teach for doctrines the commandments of men.' One of those commandments of men is, the worship of the Virgin Mary, and Saints innumerable, when the word of God says 'Worship God,'—'thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.' I know the Romanists say they do not worship the Virgin Mary ; that they do not use the same feelings for saints and her that they do for God. But why put more honour on the Virgin Mary than the Holy Spirit by the mouth of Elizabeth did ? 'Blessed

among women' she said, 'but blessed *above* women' was said by Jehovah of Jael in Judges v. 24. So the Bible shews the falseness of that system which makes the Virgin Mary into a God. Thus erring men think themselves wiser than our Lord who has said (John v. 29.) 'Search the Scriptures.' I hear that in these days the Bible is not, *in all cases*, forbidden to Catholics. I will take it for granted that you may read yours. May you study it with prayer for the teaching of the spirit to open your eyes. 'All' Scripture is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness, the study of that book must always be the duty of fallen man, it is as a light shining in a dark place. May its bright beams guide you back to the truth from whence you have strayed. Pardon my freeness,

and believe me, your sincere friend,

ARABELLA MARTIN.

Ella read with a melancholy smile. "There is no answering such folly as that," she said to Herbert, as she offered him the letter. "Oh! I need not read it," he said, unceremoniously burning the friendly missive, "and as to an answer, I think such *very* kind friends must have none."

"But here is a letter," interrupted Ella, "which tends to convince me more and more that there are large numbers of our poorer friends, who have only to

be taught what the Catholic Faith really is, to embrace it with fervour and sincerity."

"Read it," said Herbert, and his companion read as follows :

Honoured Miss,

We received your very kind letter on Friday. It gave us all the greatest pleasure to find we were not forgotten. My wife cried for an hour when she heard you had left the Church of England, but bonds and afflictions await us all in this life, and we must, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of Heaven ; right eyes and right arms must be taken off when we conscientiously feel within ourselves they are in the way to that better and brighter world which we are all born to inherit. By changing our sentiments in religion, I am inclined to think, it's a simple idea for any person to be offended at, providing we are careful to maintain good works, and lead holy lives ; very good Protestants have turned Catholics and Dissenters too ; every man according to his own order, Christ, the first fruits, is the grand motto of all our profession and if we love him and lead holy lives, who can say nay, if we are followers of that which is good. Might you be governed and guided by the good spirit of his grace, and bring forth fruits meet for repentance, close your eyes in peace, rest from your labours, and enjoy that

felicity which is reserved for you and all the people of God. Mr. Russell and Mrs. Russell have felt very much, they were so much attached to the Church. And also the old lady, his mother. She has been a fine lady in her day, full of kind and tender sympathy. May the Lord reward her in Heaven for every good work, and who can tell before this vain world is burnt up, probably we may all be Catholics, and righteousness might cover the earth, as waters cover the channels of the sea. We beg to send our humble duty to Mr. Herbert and to Miss Worth, who, no doubt, is a good friend to you now. A letter from you will always be esteemed as a favour and a great pleasure. My wife's best duty to you, honored Miss, with the duty of your humble servant,

ELIAS WILLIAMS.

This was from the schoolmaster at Seacombe, to whose wife, who had been her nurse, Ella had written a short time after she had become a Catholic.

"Good souls," said Herbert, "loving hearts and true, well-conducted, and with simple upright minds, they really ought to be Catholics."

And something said in Ella's heart, "Perhaps they may."



CHAPTER XIII.

CONCLUSION.

WHEN Ella was received into the Church, she had read her profession of faith in the Chapel at Monkton. No one had been there but Mrs. Monkton, Herbert and Mr. Vernon. After this, she had received conditional baptism and the sacrament of Penance. Her pure and innocent life made confession a joy rather than a sorrow. Almighty God had done so much for her, had led her through her young years in such ways of pleasantness and paths of peace, and had given her in possession and promise so full a store of domestic bliss, that to confess her simple failings with the overflowing contrition of a loving heart,—confess and be forgiven, was, to her child-like soul, a humiliation full of sweetness, which grew into exalted gratitude and love as her spirit hung on the words of blessing and absolution pronounced by the Priest from God. Till then, Ella seemed to have lived among shadows, but now, all was reality—all was TRUTH. She knew that our Blessed Lord had explained to his Apostles “that repentance and remission of sins

should be preached to all nations," and that they were the "witnesses of these things," on whom He sent the "promise of the FATHER," and endued them "with power from on High," for their glorious mission, but never till then had she realized these Catholic Truths. The confession of repentance had been made, and one on whom the promise of the Father had descended had pronounced the remission of sins. Never did Ella feel more certainly than when during absolution she lifted up her heart to God, that all was TRUTH.

The fact of her conditional baptism was the occasion of much vehemence among many persons. Lester himself disapproved of it at first, and Miss Worth thought it inconsistent of Catholics to give conditional baptism to converts, because they appeared to her less strict about that sacrament in general cases than the Anglican party. Herbert Stafford combatted these objections. What Miss Worth thought was a want of strictness, arose from no disrespect to the sacrament, but from a contrary view of its absolute importance, so as to provide against the omission of that sacrament, even in cases of the greatest necessity ; when a layman, a woman, or even a heretic, could give lawful and valid baptism. Herbert also urged on Lester the notorious facts of invalid baptism in the Anglican Church, brought against her by herself to produce greater strictness on such a momentous point. He re-

minded him that they had, each of them, more than once, given conditional baptism to persons who had been baptized in Dissenting meeting-houses, and the Church of Rome claimed to do no more.

"Now, Miss Worth," said Stafford, "you were one of Ella's Godmothers, you hold the true views of Baptism—'Unless a man be born again of water and of the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.' Can you say positively that Ella's baptism was valid? Can you take on yourself to declare, at this distance of time, and with the knowledge of a variety of inaccuracies in the administration of this Sacrament having occurred, even with well meaning persons, that Ella's baptism was valid. That she was baptized with true natural water, and that the right form of words were used, at the same time as the water was applied?"

"Of course I cannot distinctly declare on my own authority that it was exactly as you say," replied Miss Worth. "I can only say that *I fully believe* that Ella was rightly baptized."

"And such is my impression also," said Herbert, "though I was but a child when I stood by. But I think it not at all unlikely, as her father was nervous, and very naturally excited and affected, which I perfectly well remember, and as Mrs. Hardy had just triumphed over his earnest desire to have her christened in church, and as the preparation of the draw-

ing room, and the selection of the china vase, and the disarrangement of the former plan, was attended with no small bustle,—that the gentle sprinkling intended for the infant might have wholly lodged on Mrs. Hardy's elaborately trimmed robe, in which the child was enveloped. Without the most absolute certainty of baptism having been duly administered, I think no one, in his sound senses, would blame any one for receiving that Sacrament conditionally on being reconciled to the Catholic Church."

Soon Ella's mind was most seriously turned towards receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. Here, again, Ella found the Catholic opinion of the Anglican orders tacitly but sufficiently conveyed. She had been confirmed in the Anglican Church; but, though Catholics hold that this Sacrament can be received but once, she was now joyfully preparing for it. The Bishop was soon expected at Monkton, and there Ella went to spend a few days previous to his arrival. A Catholic Bishop!—Ella had never seen one: and when he came she enjoyed the sight as much as might be expected, endowed as she was with youth and spirits—zeal, and a lively faith.

The children of the school, in their best attire, were assembled in two lines on each side the door. The Bishop left the carriage, and walked between them, making the sign of the cross and blessing them, as they all knelt to receive the apostolical bene-

diction. In the hall, he was received by Mrs. Monkton, her friends and household ; they also knelt, and as the venerable dignitary stood on the threshold, and solemnly blessed them all, Ella's heart felt full indeed, and she said to herself—“ *A real Bishop!*” The next morning Ella was confirmed ; and having then received the seven-fold gifts of the Holy Spirit—the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, of counsel and fortitude, of knowledge and piety, and of holy fear, she rose after the words “Peace be with thee,” a Catholic Christian of full strength. At an early mass she had received the HOLY EUCHARIST at the hands of the Bishop.

After a proper time had elapsed, another Sacrament was approached by Ella and Herbert together—the Sacrament of Matrimony. Much speculation had arisen in the neighbourhood on this matter. Lady Martin hoped most fervently that Miss Eynon's marriage might be as private as possible. To have so solemn a thing as a marriage mixed up with “wicked or worldly vanities,” was, in the opinion of Mrs. Barrington Martin, quite indecent. And Mrs. Hardy, whose conscience was pricked sometimes by the recollection of the effect her letter had had on Mr. Eynon, used to say, in very solemn and sentimental accents, that as Mr. Stafford's conversion had been the cause, though perhaps in a remote degree, of Mr. Eynon's death, she really did think that they would have the

good taste to be as quiet as possible. When the ladies had had their talk, Mr. Barrington Martin generally made some observation to the effect, that the Catholics at Monkton had always been remarkable for their quietness, and he had no doubt that they had their own reasons for wishing to be quiet. Miss Eynon's marriage and apostacy would not be the important thing the neighbourhood expected, although doubtless it was a warning to each of them to be diligent, and never allow an opportunity to escape which might be improved in the cause of Protestantism. In perfect unconsciousness of all that the neighbourhood were venturing about her concerns, Ella went quietly on, making the necessary preparations for her marriage with Herbert and a sojourn of two years abroad. And when the wedding-day came—and it came with all the brightness with which a May morning ever beamed—there was no want of splendour in any part of the bridal array. It was verily a scandal to Mrs. Barrington Martin, for a greater contrast to her plain straw bonnet and coloured travelling dress, on a similar occasion, could scarcely have been achieved. But there is such a thing as dressing to the honour of God, and to that height of truth Mrs. Martin had little chance of attaining. There was a dole to the poor—bread, meat, and money, according to the size of the families, and a holiday to the labourers of Thornberry and Monkton. The Church was not for-

gotten—The One Holy Catholic Church. That day the Abbey and all the lands belonging to it were given back,* and in lieu of the Abbey stones, of which a great part of the house had been built, a sum to be applied to the erection of a church on the lawn at Thornberry was then dedicated to God.

Mrs. Hardy cut her wedding cake and wondered at what she had lived to see, and the party at Belle Vue began to suspect that the young converts at Thornberry might not be quite so quiet as the representative of a family who had suffered the fire of persecution.

Two years quickly passed away, it was but just enough to complete the Church, which, out of respect to the taste of the Monks, was, like their own work, of the decorated style. A travelling carriage drove to the door of the old Mansion of Thornberry, and Miss Worth, with an aspect of deep interest and affection, flew to welcome the new comers.

“Let me take little Edward,” she said, and Herbert Stafford placed a beautiful child of six months old in her arms. Ella embraced her with fondness, and all were welcomed by their old friends and servants with warmth and true sincerity.

* The possession of lands taken from the Church in the reigns of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. was ratified in Queen Mary's reign. But the subsequent spoliation of Elizabeth has never been condoned by the Holy See.

"But what is this?" said Ella, touching something which looked very like a Rosary, and hung round Miss Worth's neck; "what, dear friend, is this?"

"It is my profession of Faith," said the good lady smiling, and displaying the crucifix which hung from it. "You set us a good example, and I also have found it TRUTH."

"What a surprise, what a glad surprise, dear, dear Miss Worth," exclaimed Ella:—but Herbert asked for Lester.

"Ah, Mr. Lester is not here," said Miss Worth, "he left Thornberry a few weeks since, and his story he must tell for himself—at all events you cannot hear it now; and you have been detained here too long," she added, moving quickly with her precious charge across the Hall.—"It is time to have tea and say good night."

We have now finished our task, and tried to show how Truth on one point only, if well followed out, will affect the sincere and ingenuous mind. Relying on the wisdom of the Anglican Poet, George Herbert, who says, "a verse may find him who a sermon flies," we have tried to give the argument interest by connecting it with a tale, such as the experience of the last few blessed years has easily supplied. May the Harvest of years to come, be yet a thousand fold more abundant.

FINIS.



